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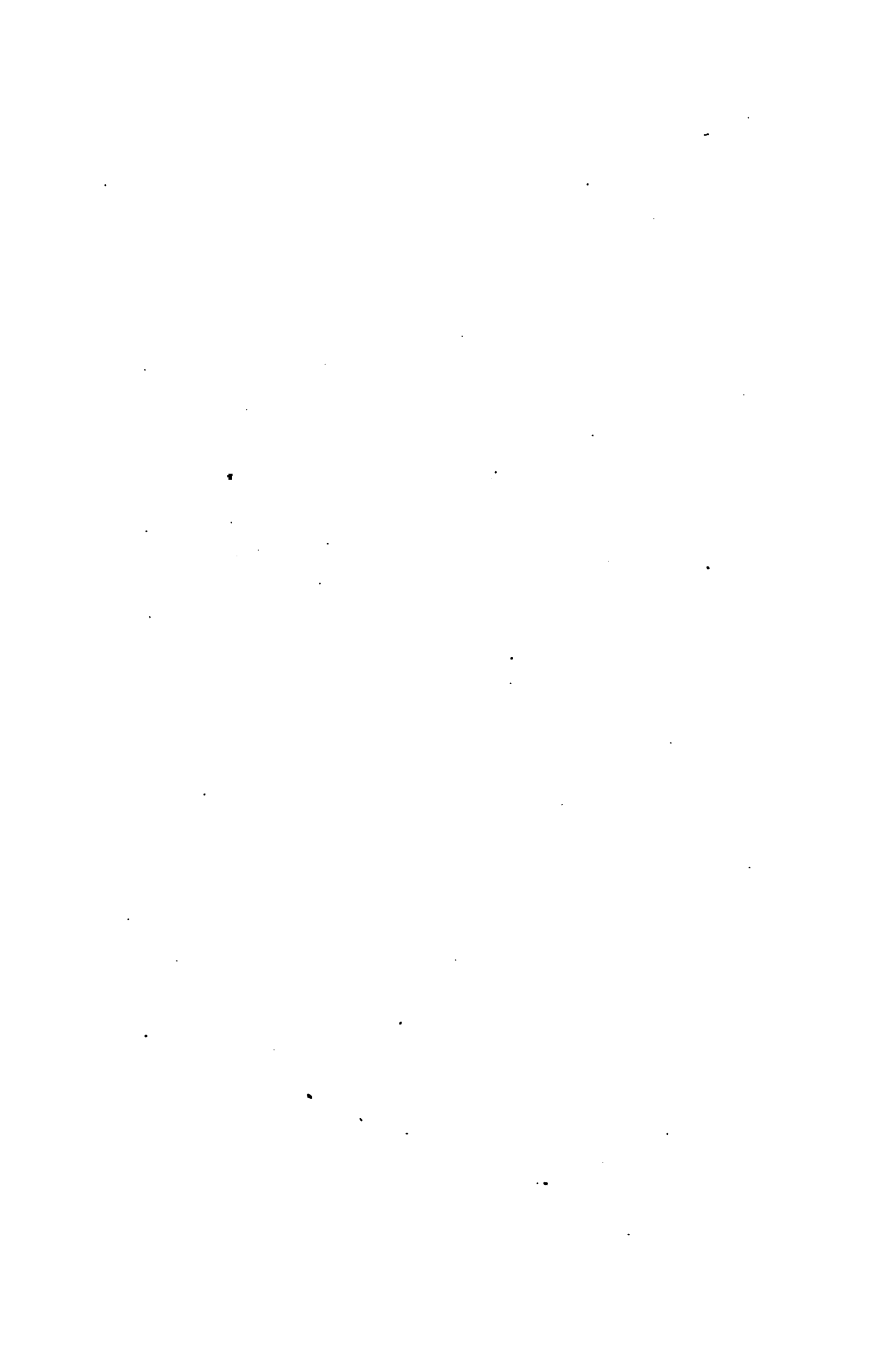
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FAITH AND DOUBT



OR, THE BIBLE AND THE CREEDS.





FAITH AND DOUBT;
OR,
THE BIBLE AND THE CREEDS.



FAITH AND DOUBT;

OR,

The Bible and the Creeds.

BY THE

RÉV. CHARLES HEBERT, M.A.,

Of Lowestoft, and of Trinity, Cambridge.

“*ἔis τι ἐδίστασας;*”

“Wherefore didst thou doubt?”

“Our one desire, to know the truth ;

Our one fear, to believe a lie.”

Prof. Tyndall.



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PREFACE.

I HAVE put “the truth” for “truth” in the motto on the title-page that is taken from Professor Tyndall, to make it specifically applicable to these thoughts ; I cannot call them sermons, as they took this form in solitary consideration at home. The Greek is added for those who love that language : but it is so inserted as not at all to impede the English reader.

Separated unto thought, research, and prayer, the writer would fain be helpful to them that doubt, as well as to those who believe.

LOWESTOFT,

June, 1872.



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I.

The Holy Spirit, Christ's Substitute
on Earth.

*Preached in St. John's Church, Lowestoft, on
Whit-Sunday, 1872.*



I.

The Holy Spirit, Christ's Substitute on Earth.

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments, and I will entreat the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever—The Spirit of the truth."—JOHN xiv. 15, 16, 17.

THE inestimable value of the gift of the Spirit to the Church of Christ may be gathered from these two circumstances; (1) that it is the object of the Saviour's prayer to the Father, and (2) that it is the subject of the Saviour's promise to His Church. "I will ask," "I

will entreat the Father," "I will earnestly ask Him" that this gift may be bestowed upon you. Every word that Jesus at this time uttered to His disciples seems to teem with love and tenderness. Judas had been directed to leave them :, and Jesus, freed from all restraint, pours out His expressions of affectionate concern. All His words seem "wet with the dew of heaven," and they inexpressibly animate and console. This occasion He takes, when none but the spiritual are present, to give the first of four special promises of the Holy Spirit. Let us much ponder the words, hiding them in our hearts. "If ye love Me, keep ye My commandments, and I will entreat the Father, and He will give you another Comforter" (Helper, *παρακλητός*, Paraclete), "that He may abide with you for ever—The Spirit of the truth." A

gift so spoken of at such a time by such a Lord must be inestimably precious to every one of the Saviour's friends.

I will now quote one other scripture in support of this persuasion. It is from chapter xvi. Begin verse 5: "Now I am retiring to Him that sent Me. Because I have said these things to you, the grief hath filled your heart. But I am saying the truth to you. It is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Paraclete will not come to you: but if I go My way, I will send Him to you." The world may make the enormous mistake of deeming the Holy Spirit's existence uncertain, and His presence with Christ's servants a dream; but with words like these before us, if we believe in Jesus as the Son of God, we must needs set the highest value on the Spirit whom He says

He will send. We may therefore entirely concur with the conduct of a veteran minister of Christ who said, when the younger members of his family entered his study warm with praises of a devout young preacher, to whom they had been listening, "Does he make much of the Holy Ghost?" So I would say, Do we honour the Spirit? Do we seek for His gifts, and look to Him in all ordinances? Do we this more this year than the last? more and more continually?

But I have mentioned that at this time our Lord utters four separate promises of this Spirit. The second begins in the 25th verse of this chapter: "These things I have spoken to you, abiding with you; but the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and will bring to your

remembrance all things which I said to you." A most precious repetition of the promise in the text! Then follows in chapter xv. the similitude of Christ to a vine—"the true vine;" and at the end of it, after speaking of His own being hated without cause by the world, He adds, "But when the Paraclete come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of the truth, which proceedeth (goeth out) from the Father, He will testify concerning Me." This is the one scripture on which is founded the doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father. The fourth of these promises of the Spirit by Jesus at this heart-touching time, begins in verse 7 of chapter xvi., with the words I have already cited: "If I go not away, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go away, I will send Him

to you," and then Jesus continues, "and He will come and convict the world concerning sin, and concerning righteousness, and concerning judgment." I stop to say again, What a mistake is made by the world, that professes to believe in Christ, in not making much of the aid of the Holy Ghost ; for this fourth promise explains the working of the Spirit, by which the world may be wrought upon—may be convinced—may be convicted (*ἐλέγξει*), concerning these three all-important questions ; sin, righteousness, and judgment. "Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me ; concerning righteousness, because I am retiring to the Father, and ye (will) no longer behold Me ; but concerning judgment, because the prince of this world has been judged."

These things the Spirit is come to teach

the world ; (1) the sin of unbelief ; (2) the finished and accepted righteousness of Christ, shown by His being borne up to the presence of the Father ; and (3) future judgment, because the devil has already received his check in the rising of Christ. What a blessed sheaf of truth regarding the Holy Ghost is made up by these four promises of His coming and of His works, uttered by Jesus in that upper room on that last evening of special communion, before He was hurried away to be slain ! Is it not a treasury of spiritual thought for His loving followers in all time ? When will they be weary of dwelling upon it ? When will they have reached the end of its instructive words ? But Christ's saying that the Spirit would come to teach this to *the world* (and so to change its sons and daughters into partakers of spiritual

life), must be set, as a parallel scripture, by the side of that equally broad declaration of God's feeling toward *the lost world*, in John iii. 16, "God so loved *the world*, that He gave His Son, the only begotten, that every one that believeth on Him may not perish, but may have eternal life,"—a passage which, with its context, was too strong to be stifled by any narrow interpretation by the great commentator, Calvin, as his commentary on these verses abundantly shows. But we are noticing that the Holy Spirit comes to teach the world. Oh that in all lands and families one and another of the world may be brought to accept such a Teacher, so sent by the Saviour! But it is time that we endeavour to unfold and prove the true meaning of the title of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete (ὁ Παρακλητός).

It will not have escaped your notice that Christ calls the Spirit "another Paraclete"—implying that Himself also has that title, and fulfilled its functions while He was on earth; and one passage, 1 John ii. 1, calls Christ now our Paraclete (the same word, rendered there "advocate"): "If any sin, we have *an advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ." The sense of the word that embraces all these usages in one is Assistant, *Helper*; and accordingly this is the translation given to it in a recent work of great value, by Dr. Cremer. "Comforter" is indeed included in the helps of the Spirit; but the word itself is a passive, not an active word. It is not *literally* a comforter nor a helper, nor any word with an active sense; but it is one called to us, or summoned to our side (see the use of παρακαλέω twice in

Acts xxviii.) ; and this word seems to us to mean called to us by God to help us, just as an advocate is summoned or called to a prisoner under a trial ; or we may add, just as a helper is called to a warrior's side in the strife of battle. This is the original force of Heb. iv. 16, *εἰς ἑνκαίρον βοήθειαν*, "*help* in every time of need." This idea of helper at our side is sweetly touched by a pen of exquisite charm—

" One gentle Spirit at our side
To comfort, help, and guard, and guide."

But with these four promises of Jesus, regarding the gift of the Holy Ghost, fresh in our ears, we cannot pass over one special great work of the Holy Ghost, viz., *teaching* ; for this may be traced pervading all these four promises toward His church or true followers and the world. Schleusner

renders it Interpreter or Teacher. The Teacher of the world, which the Spirit would fain change; which the Son would fain save; which the Father would fain accept as sons, if they would turn and obey by grace. That this last is true is shown by many scriptures; I cite but two, the one showing that the Israelites in the wilderness were overthrown because they did not believe, and therefore God was not well pleased with them (1 Cor. x. 5); the other (Nehemiah ix. 20), which says of God, "Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them." It is not through neglect of any soul here by the Spirit of God that any of you has not living faith, it is that you have refused to accept and obey the Spirit: just as Christ complained that men would not accept and obey Him; "Ye will not come to me that ye might

have life." The Spirit is ready to become to every soul Assistant, Helper, Paraclete, Comforter, Teacher, to fill the place of the Son of Man, who is gone away into heaven till the time of His return to earth, according to the appointment of the Father, shall arrive.

But there is yet an entire portion of the text which has now to be opened, viz., the practical bearing which Jesus makes of all this. He seems to make the fulfilment of the promise contingent on two things in His disciples—love and obedience. Christ says, "If ye love me, keep ye my commandments ; and I will entreat the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you for ever—The Spirit of the truth."

Yes: it is as the Established Great Teacher of men in divine things that He

has received from the Son's lips, in the first three of these special promises, the specific title, not of the Spirit of truth, but of *The Spirit of the Truth*, τὸ Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας: that, just as Christ is called *The Truth*, because He brought to men from His Father just that spiritual truth which man could never have discovered for himself, so the Spirit should be called the Spirit of the Truth, because it is His office now, in the Saviour's place, to teach these same vital truths to mankind. Besides the utterance of the Spirit's great title, it is His standing in the Saviour's place on earth, that is the additional topic of Christ in the first of these promises.

The additional topic of the second is the Spirit's teaching of Christ's true followers: "He shall teach *you* all things,

and bring all things to *your* remembrance, which I said to you."

In the third promise there is the additional statement of His testifying concerning Christ: "He shall testify concerning Me."

In the fourth and last promise, in which Christ does not deem it needful to repeat the title, "The Spirit of the Truth," He notices (as has been said) that the Spirit will fulfil the function of convincer of the world, and He specifies the three grand lessons of which He will produce conviction in the world. So often did the Saviour think fit to repeat the Spirit's great title, and thus did He explain in detail the Spirit's work of teaching, not the disciples only, but also the world.

Perhaps there is no consequence of the fall that so much indicates the injury

that our race received in it as the feelings natural to man towards Christ and God. Where we all ought to love so much, how little is felt! They that have been brought, by persuasion and assurance that their sins are all forgiven, to feel some gratitude, wonder that their love is not much greater. They read of Christ, and are fain to admire. They think of His sufferings, and they say, How shall I repay? But lo! they are tempted to some sin—not to speak of other sins, say ill-temper, or envy, or self-opinion. They feel that Christ wishes them to crush it, and to be kind and humble. How does the love that they have stand against the temptation to indulge the thought of pride, to let slip the unkind word, to let the unkind feeling grow? Yet this is the very test that Christ puts to us daily, hourly,

continually. "If ye love me, keep my commandments, walk in my steps. As I lived, so strive ye to live! I have left you an example, that ye should walk *in* my steps." And at this point comes in the promise, "If ye will do this, I will ask the Father, and He will give you the Spirit." This promise is one of daily pertinence. We may find a continually germinant fulfilment of it. But it depends upon our conformity to Christ, upon our purity, our justice, our honour, our truth, our kindness, our humility, our rendering good for evil, our becoming unselfish, our being bold for truth, our being active in doing good, our life being a mirror of goodness, our hearts being kept for Christ, as a man keeps a small garden that he delights in; every grace watched, every weed torn up or

crushed. Fidelity springing out of love to Christ. This is a new heart. This is faith. This will be rewarded by rich indwellings and outpourings of the Spirit.

And let us observe Christ does not say, "Ye love me, therefore *ye will* keep my commandments, and I will send the Spirit,"—though this is to a certain extent true of every true follower of the Lamb. He puts it all rather as an exhortation, and contingently—I may even say conditionally: "If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and He will send the Spirit unto you." How important the difference between this and the common way of regarding the growth of the fruits of faith! The common thought seems to be, "Be sure you get the root right—secure your foundation. Get living faith in Christ, and the fruits will follow." It is

true to a certain extent. There never was a living tree without a tendency to bear fruit. But to a great extent the assumption is unsound. The tree that is not pruned and digged about, and sometimes with great care and pains, may produce very bad fruit as well as very little. Pastors as well as people may be wrong here. Faithful conduct may have been too little pressed in our care about supplanting self-righteousness. One thing is most certain, the Book of God, and not least, the sayings of Christ, leave no part of a living and working faith's duties unenforced. Nothing is assumed but Christ's strength to aid, and our need of His aid and our need of His Spirit. But to get that Spirit we are not allowed to walk carelessly, to live self-indulgently and slothfully, to conform to this vain and sinful world's demands. We must live higher ;

The Promise in affirmative form. 21

we must walk near to our Master; we must labour to be conformed to His pattern in all things. Prayer and the Bible and religious services are the weapons against sin : but these may be used in a very poor way, and with little result. Earnest fighting must be done, high aims must be maintained. A lowly spirit must be cherished. But in all this Christ's love and the Spirit's grace is wanted; and unless we make these efforts, the supply of the Spirit is to be scanty or to be withdrawn. At least, for we must put it in the *affirmative form*, "If we do live in the use of such efforts, Christ promises the Spirit. If we live to Him abundantly, we shall find the Spirit given abundantly."

This is very different, I say, from the sense in which many use the terms, "It is all of grace," and yet it *is* all of God's

grace. It is very opposite to the manner in which many say, "God must do it all;" and to a very great extent they leave it all for Him to do. But the true worker, who covets much grace, and gets much grace, is the one that honours Christ and His grace most. He that gets most of the Spirit brings most glory to the Spirit. The tone of Christ's exhortation should be borne continually in mind. If ye love me, prove your love by keeping my commandments; and in increasing love to you, I will cause you to enjoy the Spirit's influences more abundantly. "He that hath, to him shall be given." He that flourishes shall flourish more. There is no limit to the happy sanctifying influences that the Spirit can bestow upon him. The hand of the diligent findeth heavenly riches.

Shall a word be said of the contrary

course? The wisdom of the Jews, treasured in the Talmud, says, "Commit a sin twice, and you'll think it quite allowable." And certainly any sin indulged, any indifference suffered, and the world's follies practised, and all sinful thoughts and works, not only drive the Spirit away, and draw a cloud between Christ and us, and between us and God ; but they make us less feel the necessity of heavenly wrestlings, and be less inclined to the different kinds of self-denial which we must use to make the struggle. But Christ dwells not on the dark side though He might, but on the bright side ; love, obedience, and the gift of the Spirit. If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will get much of the Spirit for you from my Father.

The same principles rule in the case of the soul that is moved by the Spirit to give

itself up in true surrender. He that not yet knowing the love of Christ uses a good inclination, given by the Spirit, will get more of the Spirit ; but that is the object of other sayings of Christ rather than of this. This scripture is specially for His disciples, who when Judas had left them were a true and loving band, not perfect indeed, but Christ's genuine followers. Let us so live that there may be no doubt that we belong to a similar body in our time.

A few pointed thoughts must bring our meditations on this subject to a close.

First : If the Saviour be so solicitous about our having the Spirit of God, and that in abundant measure, what shall be said to the negligent Christian ? And what, on the other hand, to the unconsidering sinner who thinks not of the Spirit of God, or that dares even to speak of His holy

Certainty of the Spirit's Existence. 25

operations with mockery? And what shall be said of those that speak with contempt of those who believe in the Spirit, and deem that the experience of believing men is irrational, and that they are proud, pharisaical people, beneath the contempt of true philosophers? Let all such learn that if Christ is the Saviour, the Spirit is His Dispenser of spiritual blessings to men. All the Christian religion hangs or falls together. If there is no Spirit, there is no Redeemer; and God, if He exist, is not the God whom the Bible reveals.

Secondly: If moral obedience in life, and spiritual affection in heart, are things to be desired at all, they are blessings worth any pains in their cultivation. Being content with low attainments in life and in heart is a great loss to ourselves, and a great dishonour to Christ and to the Spirit. That

which seems to be wanted above all things is more Christians of a high class, of higher life, and of warmer emotions, and of more heavenliness of mind, like Christ—and evidently filled with the Spirit. Now every one is called on to believe that it lies before him or her to become eminently holy, by enjoying more of the Spirit of God, according to this most true promise of Christ. But most truly sings a skilled moderator of the Christian lyre :

“ . . . Flesh and self must be denied,
Passion and envy, lust and pride ;
Each vain desire must be subdued,
And the whole man from sin renewed.”

We must first believe this possible for us, and then resolving on attaining it, persevere in the pursuit of it by grace.

Thirdly : If the Holy Spirit be Christ's appointed substitute in the hearts of believers, then we as well as the unconverted

honour Christ in honouring Him ; and we neglect the Saviour in neglecting the Spirit, or in thinking our case beyond Him, and that He cannot do much for us.

And, fourthly: We have the sure confidence that if we prove our love to Christ by attending to all that we think to be His will, and so enjoy the sunshine of the Spirit's presence in our daily walk, that daily path of self-surrender is sure to bring us to the place where He is. For did He not say in His wondrous prayer, in John xvii., "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am (where I by my Divine nature am) ; that they may behold my glory (my Divine glory), which Thou gavest me (from all eternity) ; for Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" ? This points to heaven itself, not to a purified earth only.

In spite of the ridicule that has justly fallen upon Papius, God may have in store for this sin-stricken earth a reign of righteousness and light, in which, like Palestine of old, it may enjoy its tale of sabbaths. St. Paul may be thought to point to it in Romans viii., and St. John to describe it in allegory, Rev. xx.—xxii. The Jews believe that seven septennaries will complete man's period on this earth. But these lights flash upon the curtain of the future, and disappear. We cannot detail what God will do, as it were to justify Himself on the stage of this world, before the close.

But the saying of Christ, seems to point our anticipations to no lower place of permanent residence than what St. Paul may have meant by the third heaven, which the Jews call the seventh heaven of God.

II.

The ever blessed Trinity:

AND THE PROCESSION OF THE SPIRIT
FROM THE FATHER.



II.

The ever blessed Trinity: and the Procession of the Spirit from the Father.

“The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things which I said to you.”—JOHN xiv. 26.



ON Trinity Sunday we like to have a text in which we see all the Persons of the blessed Trinity. All appear here. *The Holy Ghost*, “whom the Father will send *in my name*,” i.e., in the name of the Son.

The Trinity of Persons in the one God should not be regarded by us as a speculative question. It wears a most practical

aspect, and becomes a theme of universal interest, when we think what each Person in the Godhead is to us; what mercy and aid we find in each; and how all, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are felt by us to be working together for us in a marvellous unity of nature. This great and high subject is then a matter of every-day life and of constant experience, bound up with every phase of our religious consciousness. May the Great Triune grant us so to feel it now!

My text leads me, first, to carry on what was said in the preceding sermon regarding the actings of the Holy Ghost. We have to think of His teaching and bringing to remembrance the things which Christ said. What particular workings of the Holy Ghost do these terms embrace?

First, they seem particularly to describe that power to which we owe the details of

Christ's discourses in the Gospels. Every true Christian loves Christ's own words. There is a chastened power in them, a depth of meaning in their perfect simplicity, which may be held to surpass all other parts of Holy Writ. Did any man, inspired or uninspired, ever write a parable that could for a moment be compared with our Lord's parables? Did any one ever once make so mild and yet so silencing answers to objectors and to emissaries of His enemies who laid traps for His words? Was there ever a religious leader in Greece or in any land who left such consoling treasures in his last words with his followers, as those which are recorded by St. John? and from which this text and the former come. But how do we get these narrations of His acts and conversations? Doubtless we might without any of the Spirit's aid have had

some accounts of Christ's very touching addresses, but we should have possessed no security that they were Christ's genuine words. Who believes that the words of Socrates, the true father of the best Greek philosophy, are given with real exactness by either of their two recorders, Plato and Xenophon? But by the Spirit's agency, which is here described, we have full confidence that Christ's very words are truly recorded. Christ said His Spirit should "teach all things," "and bring to their remembrance," (the word is, suggest to their memory, *ὑπομνήσω*) "all things" which He said to them (*ἃ εἶπον ὑμῖν*). Nor is it an uninteresting circumstance that a modern divine has written a book, not easy to answer, in which he maintains that Christ ordinarily spoke not in the western dialect of the Hebrew language (the Aramaic),

but in the very language in which the New Testament was written: and he maintains that all the four Gospels were alike originally written in that language. It greatly adds to our interest in the words ascribed to our Lord in the Greek, that we may regard them in many cases as the very words which He uttered, and in the rest as just abridgments of the very language which He used.

It is handed down that Peter aided St. Mark in his Gospel ; and, to pass over other like traditions, St. Luke says that his accounts were delivered to him "by eye-witnesses and *ministers of the word*," and we know that St. Matthew and St. John heard for themselves. But all these were to be taught, and to have their memories quickened by the Holy Ghost, that they might correctly write, and with truth

reduce to a proper length what our Saviour said.

If every true disciple would most heartily admire what has been written concerning

“Christ’s sojourn in this vale of tears—
The tale of love unfolded in those years
Of sinless suffering and patient grace,”

it becomes us not to forget that we owe this sustaining record, by which we learn what were the steps and words of Him whom we are to follow, to that aid of the Holy Ghost which assisted and controlled the writers’ pens, according to this promise of our Lord, and to other explanatory passages of Holy Writ. That some such Divine assistance was required can be told by none so well as by those who having been asked to write a life of an eminent departed man, have attempted to supply the defects in their own recollections of his

most notorious sayings by what others think they remember that he said. The Evangelists therefore needed this aid of the Holy Ghost.

But, secondly, may we not see in these words special assistance of the Holy Ghost, by which the fabric of true doctrine in the Church of Christ was built up from age to age. It is not in us to believe that general councils were throughout inspired by the Holy Ghost. Superstition had to divorce itself from candour or from knowledge ere it could venture such an assertion. It is sufficient to state that the worship of images, the celibacy of the clergy, and transubstantiation itself were all decreed in general councils.

But it is hardly possible to notice how assembly after assembly added truth to truth, like brick to brick, or stone to stone

in a building, and how erroneous doctrines, like faulty stones, were in many cases cut out and replaced by others, without ascribing it to the presence of the teaching Spirit in those faithful servants of Christ that were present, and that led the course of debate. We are apt to take the truths of our creeds as a matter of course, just as we walk without thinking of the gravitating force by which we are sustained, or as we breathe without thinking of the air. Every one imagines that he should himself draw all these doctrines from the Bible, if the thing had not been done for him by toiling fathers, and we must needs add by contending councils, from age to age before him. But the truth is that "other men have laboured;" the good fought many a good fight, and so kept the faith; and we have "entered into their labours." First,

the necessary propositions were defined regarding the two natures of Christ, and the true Godhead of the Holy Ghost. But this controversy could not be said to have taken a complete shape till the settlement of two wills in the Saviour—the human in perfect subordination to the divine—in the seventh century. And besides these there were the propositions regarding man's nature which took many centuries approximately to settle, if indeed much has not still to be done by men taught of the same Spirit.

But not only do we owe to the Spirit of God whatever there was of precise accuracy or general soundness in the spiritual-minded of all ages, but they and we alike have no power of settling these hard questions without using the only rule which can be relied upon, "the written word" of God, which we confessedly owe

to the operation of the Holy Ghost, directing and superintending the chosen men of God who wrote them, each after his own manner.

But there is a *third* sense of these words of promise, according to which every individual among seeking Christians is helped by the Holy Ghost according to and above the earnestness of his desires and prayers, in extracting the true sense from the words of Scripture. Here again there is no infallibility. The Divine Teacher is infallible: but His innumerable true pupils, the members of the one living church in all the world, can all err, because they imperfectly receive His teachings. He teaches *all the truth*, all spiritual truth; but they do not receive all. They do not submit to all. The carnal nature, that remains in the best, biases them aside. Earthly preferences and

antipathies, the faults of the great and good who have gone before them, and the errors of partisanship and personal pride, now also hinder the teaching of the Holy Ghost from having its full effect. Yes, there is something bitter, *amari aliquid*, in the best of the church's wells. But the sweet proportions, the wholesome parts, the body of truth, held so much in common by the truly devout, is due to the one Holy Ghost teaching each out of the Inspired Word, to the prayers they have offered for Divine teachings, and to the efforts they have made by the Spirit's aid to learn only the truth. Individual apprehensions thus obtained spread, till they become the general property of churches; but each individual stands and is saved by his own, which he has won, perhaps easily in early life, perhaps in hard personal struggles in secret, after-

wards, by the gracious helps of the Holy Ghost, according to the scope of this promise of Christ, on which we have now been dwelling.

I ought to add that the Holy Spirit's work of this nature is not completely described unless His work on the souls of the wicked, the resisting, those that thwart and frustrate and bring to nought His good force, is taken into view. We thus understand how God is justified on them that perish: and God forbid that we should strain those scriptures that assert this, in order to cut the Bible down to any man's preconceived system of grace, however eminent he was, or however much the Church of God may owe to him for other things. I allude to the great Augustine.

The Pharisees "brought to nought the counsel of God towards themselves," ἡθέ-

The Spirit's action on the Wicked. 43

τησαν τὴν βουλὴν Θεοῦ εἰς ἑαυτούς (Luke vii. 30). And Stephen said, (Acts vii. 51) "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost," ἀντιπίπτετε. And the like is, I conceive, the true general interpretation of the phrase, "Quench not the Spirit." All these and other scriptures plainly ascribe to the Holy Spirit a good teaching influence actually exerted, though with no saving effect, on the ungodly. We must now cease to dwell on this beautiful and attractive subject, the teachings and suggestions of the Holy Ghost, and proceed to

The second portion of this discourse, viz., the relations of the three Divine Persons in the Trinity. The Son of God says, "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach," etc.

We at once gather from the text the

subordination of the Spirit to the Father, "The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send," *i.e.*, that the Holy Ghost acts for the Father, and at His command; and the next word denotes His being a Person to act upon us, and to deal with us as persons; for the Greek is *ἐκεῖνος*, "*that*" person, that Person of the Trinity, a masculine pronoun which never would have been used for a mere influence, as was held by those ancient fathers that taught this regarding all the Persons; and in the words, "He shall teach you all things," we have intimation of the Unbounded, the God. All these heresies were checked by the Second Council. Great men and angels may teach much; but God alone teaches "*all*," or even *all* that the Saviour said. Imperfection marks men: but this is a Person free from limitation; and His aid was given to sup-

plement the limited powers of the Evangelists and their coadjutors from among the Apostles and other disciples. Thus does evidence of the Persons of the Trinity underlie every term.

And the text tells of the Son, "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send *in My name.*" This implies the majesty of *the Son*. The name of God means that which expresses His attributes or some of them. For instance, the angel that appeared to Manoah, who at least represented God and spake as God, says, "Why dost thou ask after my name, seeing it is Secret, or *Wonderful?*" which is the first name of the Son in Isaiah ix. 16: "He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father (or Author) of Everlasting Life," etc. So the Spirit being sent *in the Son's name* suggests a superior majesty of

position and office in the Son, in that the Spirit came in the name of the Son also, to fulfil the Son's promise, and to carry on the Saviour's work with His people, according to His nature and office.

If, then, the Spirit is the unbounded, the unlimited, the perfect, the Son is no less ; so that He too, as the Father also, is God.

Combine this with the truth well known and universally received in Judæa ever since the return from the captivity in Babylon, and therefore taken for granted by our Saviour, that the Lord their God is *one* Lord, and you discern in these brief words, "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name," the Trinity and the Unity, the one God in Three Persons.

I do not purpose now to proceed beyond the limits of those four utterances of Christ regarding the Spirit, which we find

in this last solemn address of Jesus to His disciples after the institution of the Sacred Supper ; but the other three references to the Spirit may fitly be added to this, which is the second of them, on this solemn festival of the Church.

The first, the subject of the last sermon, only repeats the sending of the Spirit by the Father ; and it only adds that He is to be sent in answer to the Son's expressed and earnest desire. "I will ask—I will entreat the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete—Helper—Assistant—Comforter—Teacher." And this Spirit is to be given by the Father as His own gift to the Church, when He takes away His only begotten Son from dwelling, in the person of Christ, among them.

But the third passage, John xv. 6, more expressly declares the superiority of the Son

to the Spirit in position and offices, though in nature and eternity they are co-equal, for Christ says, "whom I will send unto you." Notice that the word "whom" marks *the person*, like the word "*He* shall teach," being masculine. But *the Son sends* the Spirit, corresponding to the former expression, "whom the Father *will send*." So the Spirit is the Commissioned Divine Worker for the Son, as well as for the Father.

But here we see how the breach between the Eastern and Western Churches might have been, as to this doctrine, avoided. The clause *Filioque*, "and from the Son," might have been added with the full consent of the Easterns, had their creed's wording been, "And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who *is sent* by the Father and the Son," etc., instead of

“who *proceedeth from* the Father and the Son,” etc. But it is to be feared that rivalry had found place in many breasts in that seventh century, where there should have been one love and one faith. But the waters were let out; and only the outpouring of the Spirit is likely to fill up the breach, and “turn” the separating river. Yet the Easterns seem to have been right, and not we; for Scripture is our only guide, and this scripture leads us to believe, not only that the Spirit is sent by the Son *from* the Father (not *ἀπό* but *παρά*, which has an original nearness in it), but also that the Spirit of the Truth is He “that proceedeth out from the Father only,” *ἐκπορεύεται παρὰ τοῦ πατρός*. It saith not, “*From the Father and the Son.*” The Greek version of the third creed (for may I not assume that the Latin is the original?)

mistakenly puts ἀπό (cut off from) in the place of παρά. This is the only passage which in words touches *the Procession of the Holy Ghost*. How ready then must the two branches of Christ's Church have been to separate, when this, and no more than this, formed one-half of the dividing cause. And there has since arisen no Luther and no reviving of the dead witness of God in the East, as through God's mercy took place in the West—a point which surely calls some prophetic interpreters to modify their plausible explanation.

But again, the Scripture saith, *He*, "that" person—that Person of the Trinity—"will testify of Me;" and "Ye," it adds, "are testifying, because from the beginning ye are with Me." What a lovely lesson of mutual subordination, in place and functions, and that without any lowering in

nature, is here taught to the Church of God!

If the Son can be thus subordinate to the Father, and the Spirit thus subordinate to the Father and to the Son, though they be co-equal and co-eternal, and are one—one Godhead, co-operating as the united God, united into perfect union and amity, how should the members of Christ carry out the lesson! for theirs is the beautiful figure of many members, and of every member not having the same office, yet of all being but one body. How should each say to the other, “In thine office I have need of thee;” and the other say to the first, “And in thine office I have need of thee”! And not only is this true regarding individual Christians in the relations of each to others, but I am bold to apply it to churches; each has need of every other.

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We cannot indeed coalesce to the assertion of error ; we may not dream of sacrificing truth to a hollow external union ; but we ought to long and pray and work for unity for the maintenance of the truth. We ought to wish for it, and, when Roman usurpations perish, to expect it. We have duties to the apostate churches, as well as to the heathen. France, Spain, Italy, Russia, have claims upon England, as well as India, China, and Africa. In our present severed condition all are losers.

But a lesson nearer home must not be passed over. We ought to imitate the noble aspirations of some of the greatest of Anglican doctors towards churches that have lost episcopal government on the continent and at home. It will never be well with Protestant Christendom till Protestant sects cease to regard each other as foes,

and have found at last a way to be united in one maintenance of the common salvation, and in one salutary combined influence on the governments of all lands.

But the lessons to be drawn from the perfect order and unity in the operations of the Godhead are without end, and it is well to trace this perfect unison in the exquisitely worded revelations of evangelic truth, as caught from Christ's lips, and as with the Spirit's aid remembered at least above thirty years after by the Apostle John. Every fresh intimation which St. John has reported from his Master's many discourses has to be set, together with all the rest, in our mind in a beautiful order. Christian people should never weary of pondering this marvellous supplementary and distinct Gospel of St. John. Perhaps one of its chief aims was to explain these very relations of the

Three Persons of the One Godhead, on which we are meditating to-day.

We cannot fully enlarge on the fourth passage about the Holy Spirit in the sixteenth chapter of St. John, seventh verse, "If I go not away, the Paraclete will not come to you ; but if I go away, I will send Him to you." Here, too, we have the subordination of the Spirit to the Son ; and again we have unlimited functions implied, though not absolutely and indisputably stated. He— again, *that* Person—will come and convict, ἐλθὼν ἐλέγξει, the world concerning sin, etc., etc. What man, what angel would suffice to convince the world ?

And one word more : the force of the word "that" Person is as if He were before the eye of the Saviour, and as if the Apostles and Jesus were pointing at Him ; ἐκεῖνος (from ἐκεῖ, *there*) ; and I mention this because

of the beauty of the idea of so seeming to see the Spirit, and because it is singular that St. John in his First Epistle applies this word to our Saviour, and seems to confine it to Him entirely, as if he saw the Christ his Master, who had died nearly seventy years, continually before him. May we in like manner live, seeing what is unseen, like Moses in Egypt, and as, more or less, the people of God do everywhere !

Regarding this great doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity let us add a cursory remembrance of one or two of Christ's other sayings, showing the perfect unity of the Three Persons in action and nature, of which I have already spoken, as John xvii. 8, "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me." Then regarding His actings, (John v. 19) "The Son can do nothing from Himself (ἑαυτοῦ), but what He

may see the Father doing," etc. And again, (John v. 20) "The Father loveth The Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth," etc. ; and (John v. 22) "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son;" and (John v. 26) "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;" and regarding unity, "I and the Father are one," and we judge that by analogy many similar things might be said of the Spirit. But there is another branch of the subject relating to the Son, since in His position as Christ on earth there is a different subordination, viz., that of the manhood in Christ to the Godhead in Him, and the will of the manhood subject to the will of the Godhead in Him ; and the sinless weakness of the manhood sustained by the power of the perfect indwelling Godhead.

We can, I say, trace all these things, and see how they solve many hard passages, which must have perplexed the earlier Christians, before the successive true decisions of the Councils regarding the two natures in Christ, and regarding the one nature of the Godhead in its Three Persons, threw a definite and clear light upon these sayings of the Scripture.


Alas that subsequent Councils, and in some points the early Councils, passed unwise decrees and monstrous doctrines, to which Holy Scripture furnished no support! Yet is it not fitting to suppose that where the decisions of the Council were purest, in those Councils there were many prelates who had been truly taught of the Holy Ghost? But the same cannot be imagined regarding those other Councils (such as that of Innocent III., in the twelfth century),

whose decrees let loose so much of evil doctrine, with the full authority of the great Western Church, to go forth over all the earth. God be thanked that we have come out under protest from such strange and deadly teaching! May both we and our successors ever hold on high and keep inviolate the glory of each Person in the ever blessed Trinity!

I conclude with three observations, which arise from the consideration of this great and high theme.

The first is a truth, than which none, perhaps, more needs to be admitted and enforced in the present day.

Spoken in old language, it is that "Faith must go before understanding" in the reception of such truths as these. Does this mean that we are to believe against reason? Is the faculty by which God has



enabled man to discover so much of his place in God's creation and so much regarding His own limitless workings in it, to be cashiered, superseded and cast aside, as having no function in the reception of revealed truth, that Truth which the Spirit especially dwells on earth, in Christ's stead, to make known to man? What thoughtful man will not say, "No, in no wise." We want sanctified reason all through. Only let any one think what foolish mistakes and shallow imaginations have troubled the Church of Christ, and how often sound doctrines have been shaken by the most superficial objections, and by the vainest dreams of good mystic people, and he will see abundant need for the protecting aids both of learning and of good sense in all theology.

But shall reason venture to be dictator

in things that God only can make clear to the soul? Is it to be supposed that induction from material things and from the mind of man can give us powers to grasp the nature of God? The first thing here is to know that we know not. The second is in humility to weigh the evidences of messages that purport to come from Him; and if they approve themselves to us in patient, humble inquiry, to receive and believe them, and the messages which they support. But is this all? What if I find that I am a fallen creature, fond of sin, and disinclined to draw near to God? have I not then reason to fear lest there be a bias in my mind and heart against both God and His message, and that this alienating bias may in the first place prevent my being satisfied with a sufficiency of external evidence for receiv-

ing His book, and then afterwards may excite in me strong prejudice against some of the things which it contains?

In this case does not my own *intellect* fail? It is loaded with antipathy, and it gives wrong decisions. What, then, can I do but cry out to God against myself, asking Him to restore my perverted heart, and to give me a right and renewed spirit: that is, to give me a new power to believe what is true, to feel its beauty, and to adore both His message and Him? This is what Augustine and the Bible call having faith. Man, feeling himself blind and wrong, cries to God that he may see. The cold indifferent heart asks to become earnest towards God and His revelation; the unholy and unjust and untrue, to be made morally good and loving and grateful to Jesus for His dying to redeem. Then

the changed man can understand and believe, for it is written, "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (1 John iv. 7).

But a second observation carries us deeper into human nature. Objections against spiritual doctrines *generally*, spring not only from a darkened understanding, but from allowed and cherished sin. In the third chapter of John, after the record of the interview with Nicodemus, and after Christ's manifold teaching has developed many truths, we seem to come to the dealing of Jesus with the question "Why, after all, many—so many—are not saved?" It has been the custom in different ages to give different answers; but surely we may all wish to know what explanation Jesus Himself gave. He had said, "God sent His Son into the world,

that *the world* through Him may be saved" (John iii. 27). Then the question is, Why are they not? Christ's answer is, "The light of the gospel has come into the world, and men loved *the darkness*;" *i.e.*, they loved to live in the sphere and customs and pleasures of the godless world, "rather than in the light;" *i.e.*, men's choice is to follow their own wills, and to please themselves, and to do like other men in this kingdom of darkness—they prefer it to receiving and considering the message about real religion. So they close the heart, and fill it full with thoughts about what they like better; and thus, though the light has come to them, they reject it, and try to lose thought about it.

But our Saviour then gives the general reason of this derangement of their likings and preferences. He says that "they

loved the darkness rather than the light," because their deeds were evil. He says that, at least in most cases, there is some *sin* they will not give up: it may be some unjust advantage that they intend to continue to take, or some secret lust they will not renounce, or some most unchristian feeling they refuse to thrust away, or some known duty they will not take up; or there is some ungodly companion to break with, to whom the heart clings; or there is one whose derision or scorn they know would have to be faced and borne. And if there be nothing like these, there may be indifference to God and Christ, dislike to the Book, aversion to holy people, prejudices, contempt. But in most cases Christ seems to say there is some open or secret sin that makes men dislike the light and love the darkness

Antagonism of Heart to God. 65

better, and makes them not come to the light that they may not be convicted before God and to themselves for their sin. This is the reason He gives why so many perish ; viz., that it is not the difficulties of the doctrine, but their reluctance to give God the obedience and the love due to Him, that are the causes of the unbelief which will have filled the cells of the condemned souls, when death has transferred the doubter to what he disbelieves.

Now a third observation must be made. Remember how we have, we trust, reverently tracked the workings of the Father, Son, and Spirit in the wondrous scheme for offering pardon to sinful man, and persuading them to embrace it. If God in Three Persons is so earnest, operating in such a high and wonderful order for your peace and elevation and happiness,

what shall be said if you live and die in indifference? Heaven and hell, the good and the wicked one, ὁ πονηρός, are contending for you. Will you be simply raking money together? Will you be making provision for as many pleasures as you can enjoy on your way? Will you be content with any of earth's businesses, or earth's baubles, and not care about the recovery of your soul? Shall the Father send the Son, and the Father and the Son send the Spirit, and the fabric of true doctrine be built, and shall He establish churches and provide all means of grace in vain? And will the frustration of all bring no remorse? Then what is the fire? what the worm that dieth not, thrice declared in one chapter?

And lastly, may not every one who has been brought to submit to Christ learn

activity and order from the operations of the Supreme? Such a Father! Let His children be diligent and wise, and good and kind, and true and just, and holy, and caring, like Him, for the lost! Then such a Son of God, stooping so low to become the Christ! Oh for disciples that seem really to follow Him! And then such a Helper, Comforter, Teacher! Oh to look to Him more, and to grieve Him less! Oh to be with such a God to eternity! Oh to bring others to Him, that heaven may be filled! God forgive our neglect, as well as our transgressions; and may we serve and love Him more!

To sum up the force of the four texts about the Paraclete, in which Christ, in His last discourse before His arrest and death—thought fit to give to His disciples a large revelation of truth about the Trinity—

are we to turn our back upon it, and say, "The subject is too subtle, as well as too vast for our understandings. We had better try to be kind and true, and we shall be saved without any presumptuous meddling with these mysteries"?

But the answer is on the surface: "If things were so, would Jesus have spoken to His disciples about them on that last occasion? and would the Holy Ghost have helped John faithfully to report them to us?" The truths must be wanted: they must be such as will bear a part in making us kind and true, good and holy, and in Christ Jesus our Lord.

May it not be that though there is much about God's essential nature that cannot be comprehended by man, there are some things about His relations to man, and man's relations to Him,

that may be partly apprehended and deeply felt? If so, ought not man to desire to know those things? and is he blameless if he does not use all methods for learning them? But this requires a little elucidation.

About half a century ago, one of the leaders of those who have succeeded in creating modern scepticism publicly affirmed that man is no more accountable for his religious belief, than for the colour of his skin. Such a declaration would hardly be put forward now.

But what ought a sceptic to do?

Built on a vast mass of evidence, the Book of God makes known a mode of human regeneration; and all man's philosophies have not produced another that endures discussion.

Christianity, too, is the only scheme

that has wrought any great improvement on any large body of mankind. Does it not on both grounds claim humble attention?

It offers to man so much, viz., subjection to law, and a consequent peace. But it calls on him to bend the knee in prayer to Him that gave this revelation, in order that he may prepare his mind and heart to believe and receive these great blessings.

Is it unreasonable that God should require this?

Man needs a great change. He has to bow down and ask God for it. He has to pray that God may enable him to understand and receive salvation by the Saviour through the Spirit.*

* See a sermon by the Rev. C. Pritchard before the British Association at Dundee.

III.

The Usefulness of Creeds,

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

THE THREE CREEDS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

“Creeds and other the like formularies, which are to be put into every one’s hands and spread round about, ought not to contain anything till it has been . . . proved . . .”—*Dr. Waterland on the Athanasian Creed*, p. 188.





III.

The Usefulness of Creeds,

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

THE THREE CREEDS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

AS the limits of a sermon are too narrow even for a sketch of a part of the argument from history in favour of creeds, I may be excused for supplementing it by a note.

The present age is marked by a considerable disposition to ignore the service they have rendered. Their failing points are dwelt upon, and it is more than hinted to

the public that we should be better without them. A few considerations from church history in their favour may incline us rather to amend them, if it is needful, than to cast them aside.

As to that which is called the Apostles' Creed, the arguments against the fable in Ruffinus, that all the apostles took part in its construction, which was once so surely believed by most writers, has been so utterly shaken to pieces, that we cannot even draw from it an argument in favour of its superior antiquity to the Nicene. Perhaps the best reason for conjecturing that it is the earlier of the two, is its being found in varying forms in different nations of the West. But if it was earlier in some form or other, it is not easy to discover which form of it was the earliest, and whether there was not some earlier nucleus of

the faith than any of those that have survived, or even many; and perhaps the most natural hypothesis is, that there was a growing series of such agglomerations of the prime doctrines in formularies, many of which appeared during the first three centuries, and of which the earliest were in or near the apostles' time. But all this is, I suppose, capable of being traced step by step in the comparatively few volumes of patrology before Origen. It would be a very interesting, and not an arduous work, embracing East and West.

This, however, may suffice to incline us to believe that the Apostles' Creed was, in all probability, the earliest. But it has a second distinction, that it never contained any doubtful assertions; so that its usefulness has been unalloyed. And its never being burdened with an anathema against

dissentients, may be taken for a third argument that it is earlier than the Nicene, and came from a more primitive age.

Our attention, however, is chiefly called to the second and third creeds; both of which had or have both anathemas and doubtful matter.

We turn first to the Nicene Creed, the first great fruit of the establishment, as it is called, of Christianity, as the religion of the Roman empire. That Athanasius owed much to it in his long struggle against Arians and semi-Arians can hardly be doubted. The other great party, that of the court-bishop Eusebius, of the Cappadocian Cesarea, was from the beginning in favour of a compromise. To this party at last even Hosius yielded, a little before his death, during the prevalence of the Arian heresy. We may infer that had the first

two councils not formed this our second creed, the doubts of the Godhead of Christ would have spread wider, and eaten their way further into the received doctrine of the Church, so that they would have destroyed the vitality of the religious hopes of vast numbers.

The pressure must have been very great when even Hosius of Cordova, who ranks as the original proposer of the calling of a general council against the party of Arians, gave way before it.

But there was one part of the Nicene Creed, as adopted at that First Council (A.D. 325) that was not needed to secure the great object of Athanasius, viz., its final clauses. I quote them from Athanasius i. 247 (Paris, 1627). *Τοὺς δε λέγοντας* “*Ἦν ποτε, ὅτε οὐκ ἦν.*” *Καὶ* “*Πρὶν γενηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν.*” *Καὶ ὅτι* “*Ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο*”

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ἡ Ἐξ ἐτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας φάσκον-
 τας εἶναι· ἢ κτιστὸν ἢ τρεπτὸν ἢ ἀλλοιωτὸν
 τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τουτούς ἀναθεματίζει· ἢ
 Καθολικὴ καὶ Ἀποστολικὴ Ἐκκλησία. The
 English is, "But those who say that
 'there once was (a time) when He (the
 Son of God) was not,' and 'before He was
 born He was not,' and that He was born
 (or came to be) out of non-existents; or
 continually saying that He is of another
 substance or essence, or that the Son of
 God is created, or turned, or made into a
 Being of another kind—these the Catholic
 and Apostolic Church anathematises." But
 the spirit in which the excellent father is
 here writing may be gathered from his
 calling his opponents, four lines lower down,
 "the madmen who follow Arius," οἱ Ἀρειο-
 μανῖται, a common expression at the time.
 This abuse was certainly unbecoming and

Second Creed rid of its Anathema. 79

unnecessary. But all these clauses were cut off at the Second Council (A.D. 381), and the revised creed was issued without any anathema ; and without any anathema it has prevailed against Arianism.

But as to our third creed, we in England are debating what shall be done with it. As to its right to its name, "The Creed, or the Faith, of S. Athanasius," Mr. Foulkes contends that it is the production of the great Archbishop of Northern Italy, not far from the beginning of the ninth century ; and it seems to me that the main course of his arguments is sound, unshaken by his opponents.

This creed certainly seems to assail some errors later than the time of Athanasius. If so, we cannot recognise in it either his own hand or his belief. But the chief question is, Ought we to retain the decla-

rations of everlasting perdition, which the great care of the compiler of it has indissolubly bound up with every item of its dogmas? These declarations we admit not to be actual "anathemas" or imprecations, in so far as they are not in the form "let them be accursed," and because the word "anathema" is not used. But they are next in degree. They are denunciations. They declare all such persons eternally lost. Then ought our Church to retain them? and is not the creed in great peril of being by authority laid aside out of the public use on their account?

As to the date of the compilation of this creed, some say it is a matter of not the slightest consequence. But it greatly affects the feelings of many; for while they would consent to making a change in a creed of the eighth or ninth centuries,

their hearts would rise against altering a creed of the fourth century or even of the fifth. See the Bishop of Ely on the Articles. It is therefore of some consequence to throw in, though as collaterals only, a few considerations affecting the date of what is termed the Athanasian Creed. In Waterland's account of the Latin MSS. of it, the date of the earliest (Usher's) plainly rests on no sufficient authority, and none of the rest seem certainly referable to any date much before the end of the eighth century. Next, none of the Greek and other translations pretend to quite so high an antiquity as A.D. 800.

Then as to any mention of this creed in the Fathers or in Councils, take Warburton, or any work summing up the evidence on this point, from the death of Athanasius, 373, to 800. He at once gives up the fifth and

sixth centuries. His first stand is made at 670, the Council of Autun. But it appears in his account that the canon which he quotes as mentioning this creed belonged to a much later council held at that place, and was incorrectly added to its real canons. His next stand is 760, a very doubtful case, and so we drop to a council held at Frankfûrt, on adoptionism, in 794. But even there the allusion to this creed is at least uncertain, for the expression there is only "The Catholic Faith of the Trinity." This, however, is very close on 800; after which date it is very notable that his instances multiply and become indubitable, even before Hincmar's orders to his clergy. See Waterland's details after 800, beginning with Theodulphus in 809.

May I not then ask three questions? (1)
If this creed were really compiled before the

When our third Creed was compiled. 83

end of the eighth century, why is it not often quoted in treatises on the Trinity and in councils against heretics in the long period from the death of Athanasius in 373 to 800? and (2) On the separation of the Eastern and Western Churches in the seventh century, why is it not quoted to favour the Double Procession? It is quoted on that subject in 809, by Theodulphus. And again, is there not an anachronism in its asserting the Double Procession, if, as Waterland says, it was framed long before that doctrine was admitted into the Nicene Creed? And (3) . If it had existed when the adoptionist controversy arose in the eighth century, would not Alcuin and Paulinus, who opposed that heresy "with both hands," have adduced it in their favour? and what could have suited them better than the clause of this creed, "God of the substance of the Father,

begotten before the world"? Is not Mr. Foulkes' theory strengthened if these questions cannot be answered? Of all comments upon it, the only one of any weight in this inquiry is the assumed comment of Venantius Fortunatus, in A.D. 570. Mr. Foulkes' research has furnished a strong reason for believing that this is the work of another Fortunatus, and that at any rate it is not earlier than the ninth century.

There is in our time unquestionably a deep-rooted objection, and a widely spread opposition to the denunciatory clauses, particularly on the part of the laity. Memorials have reached us for altering this creed, or for entitling clergymen to drop it out of the public service. But we may ask, Can its doctrinal protest be well spared? Are not its doctrinal protests needed in this age? I, for one, think they are greatly

needed. But the primary question is, Are the denunciatory clauses true ?

Let us now assume with all confidence that the faith of Arius was wrong and perilous. But does it follow that all the Arians and semi-Arians certainly "perished everlastingly"? Doubtless he did not believe that the majesty of the Son was "co-eternal" with that of the Father ; but are we sure that on this account his soul was for ever lost ? He seems to have been of a somewhat clouded, if not confused mind. But is he to have no credit for saying, in one of his careful explanations of his opinions, the Son was "full God" ? See Theodoret (iii. 750), and Epiphanius, in whose works a letter from him to Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia, has been preserved, containing this and other assertions. The importance of this document may justify my giving it

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in Greek, and adding a close translation. It will be seen that in a clouded and inconsistent way he held the Godhead of Jesus. He drew indeed a bold and, we think, a wrong inference from the term "begotten of the Father," but he certainly thought that the Son was truly and really God. Is such a belief outside the pale of salvability?

Κυρίῳ ποθεινοτάτῳ, ἀνθρώπῳ Θεοῦ, πιστῷ, ὀρθοδόξῳ, Ἐυσεβίῳ Ἀρειος, ὁ διωκόμενος ὑπὸ Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Πάπα ἀδίκως, διὰ τὴν πάντα νικῶσαν ἀληθείαν, ἧς καὶ σὺ ὑπερασπίζῃ, ἐν Κυρίῳ χαίρειν.

Τοῦ πατρός μου Ἀμμωνίου ἐρχομένου εἰς τὴν Νικημηδείαν, εὐλογον ὀφειλόμενον ἐφάνη, προσαγορεύσαι σε δι' αὐτοῦ, ὁμοῦ τε ὑπομνήσαι τὴν ἔμφυτόν σου ἀγάπην, καὶ διάθεσιν, ἣν ἔχεις εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφούς διὰ τὸν Θεὸν καὶ τὸν Χριστὸν αὐτοῦ, ὅτι μεγάλως ἡμᾶς ἐκπορθεῖ καὶ ἐκδιώκει καὶ πάντα κάλων κινεῖ καθ' ἡμῶν

ὁ ἐπίσκοπος, ὥστε καὶ ἐκδιώξαι ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς πολέως ὡς ἀνθρώπους ἀθέους, ἐπειδὴ οὐ συμφωνοῦμεν αὐτῷ δημοσίᾳ λέγοντι · Ἄει ὁ Θεὸς, αἰὶ ὁ Ὑἱὸς· ἅμα Πατὴρ, ἅμα Ὑἱός· συνυπάρχει ἀγεννήτως ὁ Ὑἱὸς τῷ Θεῷ· ἀειγεννῆς ἐστίν, ἀγεννητογενής ἐστίν, ὅτε ἐπινόια οὔτε ἀτόμωτινι προάγει ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ Ὑιοῦ· αἰὶ Θεὸς, αἰὶ Ὑἱός· ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ Ὑἱός. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ Ἐυσέβιος ὁ ἀδελφός σου ὁ ἐν Καισαρείᾳ, καὶ Θεόδοτος, καὶ Παυλῖνος, καὶ Ἀθανάσιος καὶ Γρηγόριος, καὶ Ἀέτιος, καὶ πάντες οἱ κατὰ τὴν Ἀνατολὴν λέγουσιν ὅτι προυπάρχει ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ Ὑιοῦ ἀνάρχως, ἀνάθεμα ἐγένοντο δίχα μόνου Φιλογονίου, καὶ Ἑλλανικοῦ, καὶ Μακαρίου, ἀνθρώπων αἰρετικῶν, ἀκατηχῆτων τὸν Ὑἱὸν λεγόντων, οἱ μὲν, ἐρυγὴν, οἱ δὲ προβολὴν, οἱ δὲ συναγεννητόν. Καὶ τούτων τῶν ἀσεβειῶν οὐδὲ ἀκοῦσαι δυνάμεθα, ἐὰν μυρίους ἡμῖν θανάτους προσαπειλήσωσιν οἱ αἰρετικοί.

Ἡμεῖς δὲ τὶ λέγομεν καὶ φρονοῦμεν καὶ

ἐδιδάξαμεν καὶ διδάσκομεν ; "Οτι ὁ Ὑιὸς οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀγεννήτος, οὐδὲ μέρος ἀγεννήτου κατ' οὐδενὰ τρόπον, οὐδὲ ἐξ ὑποκειμένου τινός, ἀλλ ὅτι θελήματι καὶ βούλῃ ὑπέστη, πρὸ χρόνων καὶ πρὸ αἰώνων πλήρης Θεός, μονογένης καὶ ἀναλλοίωτος· καὶ πρὶν γενεθῇ ἢ κτισθῇ * ἢ ὀρισθῇ, ἢ θεμελιωθῇ, οὐκ ἦν. Διωκόμεθα ὅτι εἴπαμεν, Ἀρχὴν ἔχει ὁ Ὑιός, ὁ δὲ Θεὸς ἀναρχός ἐστι. Διὰ τοῦτο διωκόμεθα, καὶ ὅτι εἴπαμεν, ὅτι ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐστὶν. Ὀυντω δὲ εἴπαμεν, κάθоти οὐδὲ μέρος Θεοῦ, οὐδὲ ἐξ ὑποκειμένου τινος. Διὰ τοῦτο διωκόμεθα ; Λοιπὸν συ οἶδας.

"Ερρῶσθαί σε, ἐν Κύριῳ εὔχομαι μεμνημένον τῶν θλιψέων ὑμῶν, Συλλουκιανίστα ἀληθῶς, ἀληθῶς, Ἐυσέβιε.

"To the most desired Lord, man of God,

* There is a reading *τικτισθῇ*, which of course is most incredible Greek ; but the *ἦτοι* there seems not right. I may then let *κτισθῇ* stand, as it is a word belonging to the heart of this controversy.

faithful, orthodox Eusebius, Arius, who is being persecuted by Alexander the Father unjustly, on account of the truth that conquers all things, which thou also defendest in the Lord, hail.

“As my father Ammonius is coming to Nicomedia, it seems to me reasonable (and) due to address thee by him, and at the same time to call to mind the love that has grown in thee, and the disposition that thou hast unto the brethren on account of God and His Christ, because the bishop greatly spoils and greatly persecutes us, and moves every rope against us, so that he also persecuted us out the city as godless men, since we do not accord with his saying in public, ‘Always God, always the Son. At the same time the Father, at the same time the Son. The Son is by nature together with God, without being born.

He is born from eternity, He is descended without being born. Neither in thought nor in any atom has God precedence of the Son. Always God, always the Son. The Son is out of God Himself.'

"And since Eusebius thy brother that is in Cæsarea, and Theodotus, and Paulinus, and Athanasius, and Gregory, and Aetius, and all that are in the East, are saying that God exists by nature before the Son without a beginning, *they became anathema*, except only Philogonius and Hellanicus and Macarius, (the really) heretical men, not to be put down by oral teaching (and) saying of the Son, some that He is a casting forth, and some a putting forth, and some jointly unborn." Another reading makes "unborn" agree with "a putting forth." "And these impieties we cannot even hearken to if the heretics threaten us with ten thousand deaths more.

“ But we are saying and thinking, and did teach and are teaching, ‘that the Son is not unborn, nor a part of (the) unborn in any manner, nor is of any underlying (substance); but that He came into being by will and counsel before the times, and before the ages, full God, only born, and not changed from being of another kind; and that before He was born or created, or defined (see Rom. i.) or founded, He was not.’

“ We are being persecuted because we said the Son hath a beginning, but God is without a beginning. On this account we are being persecuted because we said, ‘He is not out of the things that are.’ But we said thus because He neither is a part of God nor of any underlying (substance). On this account we are being persecuted: the rest thou knowest.

"I wish thee farewell in the Lord, remembering our tribulations, O Eusebius, who art like me a Lucianist indeed."

Five years after the Nicene Council, Arius declared, before re-admission, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had been begotten of God—the Word of God, and that by Him were all things, *ἐγένετο* ; but he did not even then admit the Son to be co-eternal. Did this error, then, in the Arian conception of Christ's Godhead make him and all his followers incapable of saving belief in Christ? Dean Milman, if my memory serves me well, argues to the contrary, (1) from the recorded excellent christian lives of many Arians, and (2) from their having been for a long time the only missionary body in the Church. (See his "Latin Christianity.")

But it is said, *per contra*, that the Bible

The worst point in Arianism. 93

declares that those who believe not on the Son, *i.e.*, that Christ the Son is God, are lost. But does the Scripture ever say that unless a man believes the Son co-eternal with the Father he is lost?

The worst point in the belief of Arius was his using such a word, "created," *ἐκτίσθη*, regarding the Son. For it makes the Son at least *appear* as if He might be confounded with other creatures or creations. But even on this second item, can we venture to affirm that in using this most wrong and dangerous word Arius himself and all his followers lost all saving hold on the Godhead of the Son? There is a wide disposition, at least since Bishop Burnet's days, not to hold believers responsible for all apparent *inferences* from their opinions on election. Does then every inference that can be drawn from Arius

not holding the co-eternity of Christ so vitiate and annihilate his belief in Christ's Godhead that his salvation by Christ is impossible? If Arius said we believe Christ is God, are we to say, "Since you hold other things that do not agree with this, therefore you cannot hold Him to be God"?

But the real question for us lies somewhat further on, viz., Whether a church is justified in calling on all her sworn officials to pronounce and subscribe that all Arians are everlastingly lost? It is surely right and proper for a church to charge Arius with confusing the idea of Christ's Godhead, which we must believe in to be saved. But why must the church proceed to the concluding term of the perilous syllogism, "*therefore* all men perish who fall into this confusion"?

I have argued out this case so far at full,

both because I believe that no church has a right to impose such a declaration upon its members, and to require it to be attested in subscription, and read in congregations by all her clergy : and secondly, because the same mode of reasoning applies to many other heretics also, whom we may rightly condemn in a creed, but may not be justified in pronouncing sure to be lost.

It would be tedious to reason out fully the cases, (1) of the Sabellians, who believed in three mighty influences, *ἐνέργειαι*, instead of three persons ; (2) of the Macedonians, who denied that the Scriptures assign equality or Deity to the Holy Ghost ; (3) of the Eutychians, who did not hold two natures in Christ ; (4) of the Apollinarians, who denied the existence of a human soul in Christ ; and of other minor ancient heretical bodies.

As to the Nestorians, whom many suppose also to be condemned in this creed, it is not easy to show that they were not on the whole at least as orthodox as their successful opponent, the great African Cyril. Certainly Cyril's expressions seem to have occasioned Eutychianism ; and Nestorians may be thought to have received a full acquittal when the Western Church adopted Dithelitism, or two wills in Christ, the human in harmony with the divine. Readers will remember that Nestorius held a union of the two natures by intimate conjunction, *συναφεία*, and by the Deity dwelling in the manhood, *ἐνολήκησις*. But he refused to call the Virgin mother *Θεοτόκον*, preferring *Χριστοτόκον* : *i.e.*, he said that she bare the Christ, in whom the Godhead dwelt ; but he objected to the terms that she bare God. Cyril insisted on

This Creed touches many Heresies. 97

an *ἑνωσις φύσεων ὅυ φυσικῇ*, and on the term *θεοτόκον*.

In the subsequent centuries there were many varieties of heresy upon the doctrine of the Trinity, which rose and struggled for life, and at last died away ; but none is more expressly excluded by this creed, than the Adoptionist heresy, of the eighth and ninth centuries ; for it denied that Christ was “the Son” by eternal generation, and affirmed that He was only the Divine Son, after His incarnation, by God’s having adopted Him as His Son. “Deo Patri verum non esse Filium nec proprium sed adoptivum.” (See Alcuin, i. 760, Migne.) But this creed says expressly, “God of the substance of His Father, begotten before the worlds, and man of the substance of His mother born in the world.” No more express condemnation could be

framed except it included the words "non adoptivum." But this would have given importance to the heresy which in its main strength died out when Felix submitted to the Church. Paulinus also might well prefer to condemn Adoptionism in words almost Athanasian. For certainly this creed is *in spirit* the Fides Athanasiana; though to call it Symbolum S. Athanasii has the nature of a fraud, and looks like a successful party movement of the West against the East.

I must notice the singular statement of the Dean of Westminster, in the same able speech in Convocation, viz., that this creed denounces them that hold the doctrine of the subordination of the Son to the Father; and the reason that he gave was the assertion in it, "In this Trinity none is afore or after other," and that on this account this

creed condemns both Bishop Bull and Bishop Pearson, who held that doctrine. If this were so, not only they, but Origen, the great promulgator of that doctrine, and the excellent Theodoret and Theodore and others who maintained it, would come under the same condemnation. But the Latin words are, "*Nihil prius aut posterius*," and the Greek translation is *πρότερον ἢ ὕστερον*, and the comment of Fortunatus, I do not say Venantius Fortunatus, is, "Never was the Father without the Son, etc. ; therefore the Trinity is co-eternal," etc., (see Waterland,) which shows that he would interpret "afore or after" by "co-eternal," and greater or less by "co-equal." "In this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another, but all the three persons are *co-eternal* together, and *co-equal*." But any one may be

hurried into a mistake in the excitement of a long and complex speech. The Dean may have deserved well of the Church for much which that speech contained.

But to strengthen the notion of the value of this our third creed, it may perhaps be well to state some arguments for thinking that this creed seems to be directed against a greater number of heresies than Dr. Waterland allows. He deems it indeed to have been compiled soon after the deaths of both Athanasius, in 373, and Augustine, in 410; but he asserts that it has no reference either to the Nestorian or the Euty-chian opinions, which came in afterwards, and he assigns it to the Apollinarian times.

It is evident that it condemns the two Apollinares, when it says that Christ is "perfect man, of a reasonable soul (*ex*

anima rationali) and human flesh subsisting.” And does it not seem equally to condemn the Monophysite, or one-nature heresy of Eutyches. Let us see. I find that Waterland, in his book on the subject, treats the terms “substance” and “nature” as, in this controversy, so far equivalent as to be interchangeable. I have, therefore, to substitute “nature” for “substance,” as he does, and I read as follows: “God of the substance (nature) of His Father,” etc.; “and man of the substance (nature) of His mother,” etc.; and to add to this, “One altogether, not by confusion of substance (nature), but by unity of person.” So the creed is as truly against Eutyches as if it had run, “not of one substance (nature), but of two.” Nor is there any internal evidence that it was not compiled after the Eutychian times.

Again : for those who consider (which many great writers seem not to do) that Nestorius believed in two Christs, one Divine, the other human; it is contradicted by the words already quoted, "One by unity of person." Cyril's expression, *ἕνωσις φυσικῇ*, is indeed stronger, but it is hardly safe if there were, as we hold, two natures in Christ.

Besides the Arian and Apollinarian, Waterland only considers that it denounces the Sabellian, since each Person is "God" and "Lord;" and the Macedonians, because the Spirit also is "God" and "Lord," and therefore is a Person. But the Docetæ, who held that Christ's humanity was not a real body, but only *an appearance*, are plainly condemned in the words, "Man of the substance of His mother born in the world;" and the heathen idea of three gods is throughout denounced.

But also the believers in the ultimate salvation of all men are plainly condemned ; and (as said elsewhere) so are the Adoptionists of the eighth century ; and so, unhappily, are the Greek churches, who hold the Procession of the Spirit from the Father only.

I have said enough to show that no important heresy regarding the Trinity and the union of the two natures in one Christ escapes mention and condemnation. The very names of no heretic leaders are mentioned ; and some heresies are met with a direct negation, and others with an assertion of the opposite truths. But on the whole there is a finish and an equable dignity about all the creed that seems to me to indicate that the compiler had read many good creeds of many ages, and in a masterly manner had condensed them all. If Mr. Foulkes' passages from Alcuin are

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rightly applied to this creed—and every one should read them *in situ*, in Alcuin himself—perhaps the very calmness of the compiler, in not inserting the negative condemnation of adoptionism (“non-adoptivum”), but contenting himself with writing positively, “God of the substance of His Father, *begotten*,” etc., perhaps, I say, this was like one who, with great magnanimity, contemplating the errors of eight centuries, and having saturated himself with the accurate discriminations of the treatises of Athanasius, saw already the Adoptionist heresy falling at the feet of Truth, and refused to give permanency to its name. Speaking of Athanasius, I do not find in his treatise on the Trinity any procession of the Spirit except from the Father. It is to his great follower, Augustine, that we owe the minting of this as well as certain

other ideas that had better never have been raised.

But can we at all justify the denunciation of the Greek or Eastern churches? Of course they do not receive our Nicene Creed, with the clause "Filioque," "and from the Son," which was added A.D. 589; at which time also an anathema was pronounced, though not inserted in the creed, against all dissentients. The other clauses about the Holy Spirit, which did not exist in the original Nicene Creed, but were added at the Second Council by the influence of Athanasius and Gregory of Nazianzum, and others, describe the Spirit as τὸ Κύριον τὸ ζωοποιον τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκ πορευόμενον, τὸ σὺν Πατρὶ καὶ Ὑῷ συμπροσκυνούμενον καὶ συνδοξάζομενον, τὸ λαλήσαν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν. In these the only peculiarity in the English is that τὸ Κύριον is rendered

as if it were τὸν Κύριον, καὶ, viz., the Lord (*i.e.*, Jehovah) and Giver of life, though our translation may be said to give us the true meaning, viz., Jehovah the giver of life. The Bible prepositions are παρὰ and ἐκ, which surely ought not to have been changed into ἀπὸ. But my judgment does not go with the Bishop of Lincoln's suggestion, that we can receive the words πορεύεσθαι ἀπὸ as only equivalent to being sent, and therefore applicable also to the sending of the Spirit by the Son. It seems to be, both in Latin and Greek, taken from John xv. 26. The 22nd verse of the Athanasian Creed in the Latin is "Spiritus à Patre et Filio, non creatus, nec genitus, sed procedens:" and the last word procedens, "proceeding," seems to connect itself with the words in the first clause, "à Patre et Filio," "from the Father and the Son." The Greek

translation which I have at hand, in John Duport's Greek Prayer Book of our own Church, London, 1665, is τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον ἀπὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, οὐ ποιητὸν οὐκ κτιστὸν οὐδὲ γενητὸν ἀλλ' ἐκπορευτὸν : which is evidently a translation of the original Latin creed, and not the words of John xv., τὸ ἐκπορευόμενον παρὰ, κ.τ.λ.

A letter from Mr. Foulkes (*Church Times*, June 3rd) notes the omission of καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ in the Greek by the Eastern churches, and the Editor says, "No creed but the Nicene Creed is ever recited in public in the Eastern churches, though the Athanasian Creed (less those three words) is printed in the 'Horologion Mega' of the Easterns." But as is said elsewhere, there is the greatest difference between ἐκπορευομαι and πέμπω, etc. The ground on which East and West might concur is that

the Spirit proceeds out from the Father only, but is sent by the Father and by the Son. The doctrine of the Eastern churches is the single procession of the Holy Ghost, *i.e.*, from the Father only, which agrees with John xv. But this third creed, as well as our present Nicene Creed, teaches the double procession of the Holy Ghost, *i.e.*, "from the Father and from the Son." It follows, therefore, that the Eastern churches and all their members are included in the terrible declarations of this creed. But this was so severely and, as I think, truly reasoned out by Dean Stanley in the debate in Convocation, that I am not called to re-state the case.

But I may now ask, (1) Does the Bible say that all who believe not in the double procession cannot be saved? (2) If it does not, are we called on to say so? And (3) Is

a church justifiable in causing all her clergy to subscribe to this, and by public reading of this creed to involve all her members in this condemning of the Eastern churches?

In the case of the Greek churches, at least there can be no doubt that the denunciatory clauses are most improper. And if the only alternatives be the clergy subscribing to them and reading them, or letting all the creed go, I think things will come at last to the latter alternative.

But, I repeat, Can we afford to cast overboard this protest against errors of many kinds, as to the nature and ways of God and of Christ, in an age which tends to general scepticism, in a period when doubters are lifting their heads as if they were the only exact philosophers? I think that many of our wisest men would exceed-

ingly deprecate casting it away. The desire of surrenders of doctrine to sceptics would only grow by indulgence ; and then what would be next called for ? The late Archdeacon of London, whose friends gave him credit for much astuteness of mind, assured me that he thought he had been able to trace the effects of this creed in saving the Church of England from any great movement in the Socinian direction ; and now we are brought to this, that this safeguard—this breakwater—is in danger of being sacrificed to a partial dissatisfaction, which arises from a disbelief of these clauses only.

But what are the proposed ways of saving it ? First : The plan of adding an explanatory note in the Prayer Book for the purpose of making its terms less binding than in themselves they are, is a most ex-

ceptionable way of treating formulæ of subscription. When they are once confessed to need such aid, is it not time to change their wording?

Also it is, perhaps, harder to form a satisfactory limiting clause than to alter the document itself. And were a note constructed, would not many be dissatisfied with the application of the *animus impo-
nentis* principle to this case, when a body of constant succession like a church is the imposer of the formula of subscription.

Secondly, as to a supposed understanding, without a note like that proposed but not carried in 1688, viz., that *only the principal doctrines* are intended to be subscribed, and that the rest is merely an unauthoritative explanation, by which no one is intended to be strictly bound, the proceeding upon

such *an understanding without set words* seems even more objectionable.

But above all, never was formula made that was more closely compacted into one by assertions at the beginning, and in the middle, and at the end. It may be likened to a bale of merchandise, with three ties of strong riveted hoop-iron holding it together; and (as has been said) this is the view adopted in a decision in our courts of ecclesiastical law. Moreover a previous decision settled that the Articles are almost solely the ruling legal expression of Church of England opinion, and the eighth article says that "the three creeds are most surely to be received and believed, as they may be proved by most certain warrants from Holy Scripture." Therefore subscribers to the Articles subscribe the creeds as they are; and congregations that hear it read,

and all members of the Church are, involved.

Is there then no way of saving this creed? There is an alternative, to which the Irish Church seems to be tending, and of which our Primate, among others, has in public spoken favourably, viz., to excise the damnatory clauses. I presume that if we do so, we must let the authoritative assertion of the double procession also, which has no Scripture to support it, be removed from both the second and the third creeds. I think no one can then object to the Church's most public recitations of all her creeds; and to her requiring her clergy to subscribe to them all. But if it be thought desirable as a buttress to the faith, a separate clause might be added, especially if put as nearly as possible in the very words of Scripture, that He that believeth not in Christ being

the Son of God cannot be saved. What prevents this addition taking the place of the denunciatory clauses ?

The question now arises at the close, How we can venture on so difficult and delicate an operation as reconsidering our creeds, (1) that we may not lose either of them, and (2) that we may have them in a purer and more scriptural form.

It is the firm determination of some in high position that they will never consent to an alteration by the civil power alone ; and is there not force in their objection ? Would it not be very dangerous now to add to the precedents of times past in favour of such a course ?

Might not all difficulties be removed by a request from the Houses of Legislature to the Crown to summon to a general congress upon this subject, delegates from all

the Protestant churches, which can by so high an invitation be induced to take an interest in the matter ? At least, the Church of Ireland may be invited to join in this work, and all the colonial churches, and perhaps the Episcopal Church of America. Other Protestant churches might be invited.

The proper authorities of this nation might well provide for the obtaining of proper delegates from the Church of England, by previously passing a law for a full and fit reformation of Convocation, of course including plenty of lay representatives. The present *misrepresenting* body would thus give way to a body in which the nation might be able to confide, and the judgment of the nation be well expressed. Reform, with this object, might succeed.

Supposing such a general congress of

delegates of Protestant churches to approve of certain requisite alterations, it would be a simple matter for each nation and church, afterwards by itself, to take the proper measures for adopting them either exactly or with slight differences. And thus the doctrinal matter of the Athanasian Creed might be strengthened by new sanctions. It seems that such a process would be attended with as little peril as possible, and to the amount of benefit that might arise it is not easy to prescribe a limit. Laymen and clerics of many churches, meeting and debating in such an assembly, might be enriched with quite as much of the Holy Spirit's aid as ever rested on the faithful in any ancient council.

As it would have been unpardonable to publish this note on our three creeds without having weighed the difficulties of the

task of modifying the third, I must just state that in my judgment almost all the objectionable statements disappear by taking away verse 2, and the last verse before the doxology, and the four words, "and from the Son" in the clause, "The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son, *à Patre et Filio*, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding."

Any congress of delegates from Protestant churches would have to weigh well whether change need go any further; *i.e.*, whether, (after removing the expressions "perishing everlastingly" in the case of differing from this creed at all, and, that without "keeping the whole faithfully" a man cannot be saved,) it would be necessary to touch the midmost assertion, "But it is necessary to everlasting salvation, that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord

Jesus Christ ; and the right faith is this, that," etc. If their wisdom decided that this also ought to be changed, it would be easy to connect the second part of the creed with the end of the first part—"He therefore that will be saved, let him thus think of the Trinity"—by carrying it on thus, "and *let him thus think* of the incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," etc., etc., without further change till the last verse before the doxology, which would be excised, as said above.

So far all would be sailing in smooth waters ; and it would be for their wisdom to determine whether they would make any other alteration at all, except putting "unlimited" for "incomprehensible," and "let him thus think," for "must thus think."

I read in the *Times* that, after all that

The Utrecht copy of this Creed. 119

was at first said as to the Utrecht copy of the Athanasian Creed, it is judged to be not earlier than the *ninth* century. But this and similar questions regarding it may be safely left in the strong and persevering hands that have taken them up. *Non omnia possumus omnes.* My particular object is to raise the higher inquiries, (1) Are the damnatory clauses true or untrue? (2) If untrue, ought not this Carthage to be "wiped out"? *Atque hoc etiam magis que censeo, Carthaginem hanc esse delendam.*

Note, added during the correction of the press.—The course of correspondence in the newspapers is markedly approximating to the line of argument maintained in this paper. See the *Times* for to-day, August 21st, 1872.



IV.

The Certainty of the Vicarious Nature of Christ's Passion.

*Preached at Chamouny and Rhone Glacier, and at several
places in England, for the C. M. S.*



IV.

The Certainty of the Vicarious Nature of Christ's Passion.

"Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani? this is, My God, my God, why didst Thou forsake me?"—MATTHEW xxvii. 46. •



think that this utterance of Christ contains the most irrefragable of all arguments regarding the vicarious nature of the atonement.

It must also be allowed to be one of the strangest and most unreasonable of all strange and unreasonable things, that a large proportion of those who have heard of

Christ's sufferings from their infancy have so little feeling in relation to them ; and that Christendom at large thinks so little, and gives so small a proportion of annual income to send the tidings, of the death of Christ, to the hundreds of millions of men that never heard His name. It might be said that comparatively few Christians truly believe in it; and it must at least be inferred that their faith is of a very superficial nature, inasmuch as it has so little influence over them.

No doubt we want much more of the love of Christ in our faith. They that have most have little enough. Many feel that they have but little ; and vast numbers might be brought to admit that they have none. Well, the place to get it is Mount Calvary ; and this cry of the Saviour may move us more than any other.

May the Holy Ghost cause this subject to add power to our faith in Christ's death, and to our belief in the need of the saving knowledge of it by all mankind.

A word then, 1st, on the time at which Jesus uttered these words, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" ("My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?") They were spoken by Him about the ninth hour. "From the sixth hour darkness came over all the earth until the ninth hour," and at the ninth hour (so write Matthew and Mark) Jesus exclaimed, cried out aloud, *ἀνεβόησεν*, in those solemn words.

One would imagine that the dominant Romans kept Roman time; but the Jews' reckoning would not differ much at this time of the year. So it was when the third hour of the afternoon was about completed that Jesus thus cried out aloud, and the dark-

ness had been since noon, and the amazement of the waiting guard, and of the women, and of John, and of any remaining spectators, must have risen to intensity during those three dark hours. And now the cry breaks the silence. Dr. Lightfoot says that only Jews that knew the Old Testament in its old language would understand the words, *Eli, Eli*, in this extract from Psalm xxii. He says that in the Aramaic another word, "*Mar*," is used for *Eli*, and in this way he accounts for many thinking Jesus was not calling upon God, but crying out to *Elias*. "*He calleth for Elias: let us see whether Elias will come to take Him down.*"* But what a scene! and what a thrill that loud cry must have sent through the air! I am fain to have another speak of it.

* See Lightfoot on the passage.

“ The sun beheld it,—no, the shocking scene
Drove back his chariot : midnight veiled his face ;
A midnight, nature shuddered to behold—
A midnight new, . . . without
Opposing spheres, from her Creator’s frown.”

And he further says :

“ Sun ! didst thou fly thy Maker’s pain, or start
At that enormous load of human guilt,
Which bowed His blessed head ? ”

It was earth seeming to be clad in mourning for her dying Creator. Never was there such an hour as this.

But 2ndly, What do we believe was then being transacted ? The Sufferer tells us that He is being forsaken—left by the Father—that God as it were had turned away His face from Him in this His agony. We must believe that it was real, and that God had done so. We believe that there was One suffering there, who was God in man—the Son of God united to, dwelling in, and made one with a perfect manhood ;

and that God the Father, who had loved His own Son with unspeakable love from all eternity, now turned away the light of His face, the joy and comfort of His love, from His Son incarnate ; that now, for the first and only time, a cloud passed between Him and the Father ; and that the perfect union and communion of unbounded love was then broken ; and that the Son, being so filled with dejection and anguish, such as no man ever knew or could experience, cried out, aloud, in a very loud voice, in the words which I have taken to consider.

One hardly dares to speak the words. We should shrink from the thought of attempting to utter them as the Saviour uttered them. My heart shrinks, as from profanity, from the representation or open enacting of this most solemn of all solemn transactions that the earth has seen. I

judge not. But nothing would win me to be present at such a sight. The thought of the sight itself, and of the sounds themselves, overwhelms me. But I feel that everything here is real. What our Lord felt was *the truth*. The Father forsook the Son, left Him in the darkness alone, deserted Him at the crisis of His suffering, and thus made that suffering infinitely more—made it a thing into whose depths we cannot penetrate. “By Thine unknown suffering,” says an Eastern Church, “good Lord deliver us.”

Let us think a few moments. Martyrs have died, and some on the painful cross; and martyrs have been even deserted by earthly friends in their great woe. But this is One, to whom perfect communion with the Father had ever given unspeakable joy, and never had that Father turned His face

away till now. The anguish of the body in crucifixion, the pain of desertion by disciples, the scoffs of Jews or Romans passing by, they that were crucified with Him joining in it, and the thought of the wickedness of all this, swelled not up to a height of sadness to be compared with this desertion by God, of which the strange night that fell upon the earth, seems a type. Such now was the night on the Redeemer's soul.

But there is, 3rdly, another point in our Saviour's words, which perhaps ought to be defined. He not only shows that He was deserted by the Father, and that this caused Him heavy anguish and darkness of spirit, but He feels it so much as to be driven by it to ask why it is so. "Why hast Thou forsaken me?" We are told by the Spirit in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that though by taking the manhood to

Pangs of the Garden of Olives. 131

dwell in, and to become one with God in Him, He was made like unto us, yet that He was "without sin." Yet last night in the Garden of Olives He was so overcome that He first prayed that the hour might pass from Him ; and then He corrected His prayer, adding, "Nevertheless not my will, but Thine be done." Herein we see how much He suffered in the garden, and how real was His manhood, and how truly the manhood was a part of the Christ. The ground is delicate as well as sacred ; but that which is recorded we are bound to weigh ; and therefore we say it was not sinful for Him in that hour to ask to be relieved of the pangs that He then felt, that they might be removed from Him. But it is a deep mystery ; and we can better understand His immediately adding an earnest desire that He might be wholly conformed

to His Father's will. That there is a difference between His first petition and His second cannot be denied; nor can it be disputed that His first desire was not granted, and that the second was. This may be precisely the meaning of Hebrews v. 7—9; viz., that He put up a petition "to Him that was *able to save Him from death*," and then withdrew it, and put up another petition of cautious fear, *ἐλαβεῖτο*, not to differ by a feeling from His Father's will; and that *in that* He was fully heard, *εἰσηκούσθη*. This shows, I say, how completely the manhood felt, and therefore what a fit pattern He is for us to have set before us. Does not the inspired record lead to these conclusions? We have to receive what it says.

In like manner on the cross, in a darker hour I suppose than that in the garden, the

manhood is equally, perhaps even more, exhibited in His thus asking why He is thus deserted and forsaken in His sorrow. We are sure that there was no sin in it; but it manifests the verity of manhood. It is not a sinful questioning. He is now as ever "the Lamb without blemish and without spot." But though He sinned not, when He was tempted, He shows how "He suffered being tempted," and how tender He will be to "them that are tempted."

We dwell on this; and we are the more sure of the fulness of His human sympathy; and yet we are equally sure that the perfect God and perfect man in the one Christ did not offend. Marvellous union of infallible Godhead and unfallen manhood. How secure is our ground of faith! "In that He hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted."

We may now, 4thly, rise to the consideration of the great and blessed establishment which the doctrine of the atonement receives from these words of Jesus.

If we look into God's way of dealing with mankind in general, we find it in the case of Joshua (chap. i. 5): God says to that leader of Israel into Canaan, "As I was with Moses I will be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." Joshua we know is not only the literal Hebrew for Jesus, but Joshua leading Israel into Canaan was an eminent type of Christ, the Captain of our salvation, leading us to heaven. Yet, though Joshua, in accordance with the promise, was not forsaken, Jesus was forsaken.

But again, in the last chapter of Hebrews, ver. 5 and 6, St. Paul quotes this declaration of God to Joshua; and God says by him to the Hebrew converts, "Let your manner

be without covetousness, and be content with the things that ye have. For He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." St. Paul implies that this promise of God to Joshua, that He would never leave him, equally belongs to all God's people in every place ; and he further tells them, "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Yet, in spite of this general promise to all God's people, the Lord Jesus was forsaken of God, and this forsaking made the deep crisis of His sorrow.

Carry on this idea further. The lot of God's people is frequent affliction in many forms ; but they have this comfort in all, that they are never forsaken. "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be." "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with

thee." No ; if Christ was forsaken, it was that they never might be forsaken. They, like Paul, may have a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet them ; but, as in St. Paul's case, when they are weak and sick, it is the very time when they may prove strong, if God says, " My strength is being perfected in thy weakness." Their song then is—

" I can do all things, or can bear
All sufferings, if my Lord be there."

But the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ left His own Son in His unparalleled sufferings.

The three Jewish youths were cast into the burning fiery furnace ; and their bonds were all burnt, but they were not hurt, nor were their coats changed, nor did the smell of fire pass on them. But why was this ? The king cried out, " Lo,

I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt ;” but he added, “The form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”

I dwell not on other cases. There is Israel in Egypt, the burning bush, the smoking lamp, the Church of Christ in every age. We have all known sufferers in continued and painful sickness, with a smile ever on their faces ; and we have all known persons under the sharpest bereavements and the heaviest losses say, “It is well ; I would not dare to change it if I had the power ;” but it is all because they feel that the presence of God the Father is more than all that they lose. It is that He forsakes them not ; and yet He forsook His own Son.

But I must wake a further train of thought in this matter. There is a differ-

ence between us and the Son of God. Whatever we may suffer, we deserve far more. "Why should a living man complain," saith Jeremiah, "a man for the punishment of His sins?" and we all are, as Jacob says, "less than all God's mercies." Were we dealt with by the rule of desert, what blessing could we retain? what punishment should we escape? But the Son of man deserved no punishment. He was "the Lamb without spot or blemish," and yet where we are comforted of God, the comfort of God was withdrawn from Him.

And this is the more striking and noticeable, because He was so fully at all points perfect, that all the promises of God seemed to belong to Him of right. He alone could justly claim protection from all His foes, and deliverance in all

perils; and this principle of reward is recognised by God in dealing with Him after His death. "He made His grave with the rich in His death, *because* He had done no violence; neither was there deceit in His mouth" (Isaiah liii. 9).

But there is a third line of thought that makes this desertion of the Son stand out stranger still; viz., that it took place at the very time when it was least of all to be expected. The ineffable love of the Eternal Father to His only begotten and well-beloved Son, when would you expect it to have been if possible strongest? Surely, you say, when He was giving up heaven and its communion with the Father for men. And when, of all times in His life, if not when He was giving up that life for men on the cross?

If the Christ became incarnate simply

as a pattern, as some say, when was that pattern at its zenith of excellence and beautiful moral loveliness, if not then? When, then, should we look for the Father's love to be more especially radiant upon Him, and the light of the Father's presence to have been more abundantly vouchsafed? Surely at this time. Yet at this time He had to cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

May we not—must we not call upon the most acute opponents of the atonement to find any explanation of this matter? Is there any solution of it, but that the Christ was in the place of His people, stood in their stead, suffered in their behalf, and on account of their sins? You may go to many places in Holy Scripture. Peter, who denied and was forgiven,

The only possible Explanation. 141

says, "He suffered the just on behalf of the unjust" (1 Peter iii. 18); and it is he that says (1 Peter ii. 24), "By His stripe," (it is in the singular, τῷ μώλωπι αὐτοῦ; Montanus translates the Hebrew "His livid or bruised colour,") by one crushing blow, by His stripe we "were healed." But this leads us to the prophet Isaiah. St. Peter cited this from his 53rd chapter; and we find there, in that chapter, saying upon saying concerning the substitution of Christ for us. Hear a few of its words: ver. 4, "Surely He hath borne our griefs. . . . But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace" (the punishment by the infliction of which we have peace) "was upon Him;" and then follows St. Peter's quotation, "By His stripe we are healed." What has any

doubter left to say? The chapter says, ver. 6, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;" ver. 8, "For the transgression of my people was He stricken;" ver. 10, "Thou shalt make His soul (His life) an offering for sin;" ver. 11, "He shall bear their iniquities;" and ver. 12, concluding the testimony, of which I have but taken the highest points, "He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sin of many (*i.e.*, of all), and made intercession (Isaiah liii. 12) for the transgressors."

This truth, the vicarious nature of Christ's sufferings or death, was taught of old by the endless bloodshedding. The Epistle to the Hebrews teems with it. All Scripture from time to time intimates it. We understand now, and we can understand in no other way, why the

Son of God in Christ was forsaken of the Father ; viz., that He was then visited for us ; and that He was dying, the appointed and accepted Sacrifice for all our sins, "the just on behalf of the unjust, to bring us to God."

Yes, I may look to Him, and believe my sins are done away, once for all, by His one sacrifice once made, never to be my ruin any more ; because He then took them all away ; He expired for me ; He paid for me.

Henceforth it is a finished work for all that believe. If I believe in Him, I love Him, I am resolved to serve Him, I will try to please Him, because He died for me. St. Paul sums up all on Christ's side ; "He loved me, and gave Himself for me ;" and Peter puts his hand on the very spring of a godly and grateful

life on *our* part, when he says, "Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee." "The love of Christ constraineth us." This is the moving principle. It only needs to be kept bright and pure. He was forsaken on our account; but it was that we might never be forsaken, and that we in gratitude might try never to be unfaithful to Him.

I conclude as I began. How is it that the whole world does not love Him? and how is it that His loving followers do not love Him more, and do not carry their service to Him further? and lastly, how can it be that so many do so little, and so many do nothing, and so few make no large gift, in order that the tidings of this suffering, forsaken, dying Saviour, may be carried to every lost and perishing child of man throughout the whole world?

Of His worth, if all nations were made aware, how many tens of thousands would believe and be saved !

Is there not some one, at least, of those into whose mind these thoughts of a bleeding and forsaken Christ have now in the providence of God been cast, who will say, "I wish to show my gratitude to this Saviour. He has blest me with just so much of worldly wealth ; and little, or it may even be none, of that wealth have I taken up and cast at His feet, that it may be the means of letting some thousands more of the churchless, schoolless, Scriptureless inhabitants of this globe hear the name and sufferings of this Christ. Do I believe that He died for them—on their behalf? What have I ever done to make Him known to them? To what missions have I ever been a contributor in a degree at all in

proportion to my means? How much have I given to Christ? How much have I expended on myself, on my pleasures, on my worldly shows, how much it may be on my sins? Is it not time for me to begin anew? to see these things in a new light? to think out what duties this forsaken Jesus has left to me to perform to Him and to the world for which He died?" Yes, it is said, "He died for all, and specially for them that believe." How must this be interpreted? Are we to write across it, "He died for the elect: and all they, without an exception, are sure to be gathered; so I need not do anything: nothing rests upon me"? This were indeed to write across and nullify all the ceaseless appeals of God to us. Are we to believe that words such as Hebrews ii. 9, "He tasted death for every man," do *not* mean that He is willing to re-

ceive all, and to have pardon offered to all ?
“Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, εἰς πᾶσαν κτίσιν.”
Then surely the word just cited means that the Gospel of pardon is to be sincerely and lovingly offered to every soul on earth; and specially happy are they in any land that receive it.

The conquests of Christianity are great in every land where it has now first, of late years, been made known. The idolatry of India totters to its foundations. Brahm and his strange trinity of false gods seem about to fall like Dagon before the ark of the Gospel ; and we can point to lands once heathen, but now quite as much in the lovely order of the Gospel as ourselves. Even Mahommedans are coming in. Only apostate churches wake not at the gospel sound. Then, why is not the Church of

Christ in every land, and every town and village of every land? What will you do, what surrender will you make, what sacrifice will you give, to bring this about—to push onward the blessed victories of the Redeemer's grace? It is within the power of some in this favoured land to take this appeal to heart, to think and pray upon it, till they have formed a resolve to do something for this suffering Jesus, and for earth's lost millions, in proportion to their power, and to their knowledge of the way of dealing with men. Yes, every talent is wanted. Every acquisition may be tendered. Christ, in His providence, gave all, that a fit part of all may be given back to Him, may be spent in extending His kingdom, and His Father's kingdom, amongst men.

But how am I speaking? A preparation is necessary. That preparation, as Augus-

tine would say, is Faith—to believe with all the heart on the Saviour, to give up all the life to the Saviour's will. Great missionary donations are not to supersede living to Christ, but to be one part of it. The flint of the heart must be touched with the sight of this Man of sorrows. Oh, get to that state. Love Him that was forsaken for you ; then you may listen to this appeal. Then you will see why property was given to you.

One is tempted to say, Oh that I had greater powers to move you ! But it is not according to the Scriptures to say this. The doctrine of the Bible is, let each use such power as he has ; God can save by one as well as by another. The things that He most regards are not eloquence or philosophy, but earnest, humble longings, frequent and fervent prayer, and a true, faithful, constant life. These give the elo-

quence that God regards, to which He loves to give a blessing. These are the true road to the most charming verities of the Divine Philosophy. These are what Jesus suffered and was forsaken for ; and like begets like. They that have these will be honoured of God to produce real zeal for them in others, and real longing zeal to see them produced in all the world. Here we have personal dedication to this dejected, fearing, exclaiming, troubled Saviour, at the root of all that is good, all that is efficient for true good amongst men.

Not only is this cry of Christ the index of the great doctrine that He suffered "not for Himself," but on our behalf ; but in it lies the hidden motive that, called into life by the Spirit, has revolutionized, is revolutionizing, and will revolutionize the world into the knowledge of Jesus.

V.

God's Universal Providence.

PART I.

GOD ORDERING ALL.

Preached at St. Peter's, Lowestoft, June 9th, 1872.



V.

God's Universal Providence.

"He shall deliver thee in six troubles,
Yea in seven there shall no evil touch thee;
In famine He shall redeem thee from death,
And in war from the power of the sword."

JOB v. 19, 20.

IN the year 1867 the wife of an English missionary had been many weeks unprotected, and burdened with much responsibility, in her missionary compound outside a town in the west of Africa. Its name, Ibadan, is pronounced by its 100,000 inhabitants, Eybadda. It had been at war with the inhabitants of another town, Ijaye, which, in the following year,

was conquered, and utterly destroyed ; but that did not end the war. The perpetual effects of the war were to put the roads into the hands of kidnappers, and stop all trade, so that supplies from the coasts and from England were cut off. This had produced so great difficulty of living, that her husband, at the risk of his life, had travelled to Lagos to get supplies of English flour and clothing, and the bags of small shells that pass as ready-money in the native markets.

The chief of the midland country, hostile to English interests as well as to the English religion, had set soldiers in bands on the road to watch for and kill the missionary if he attempted to return to Ibadan, saying that he could not sell a white man for a slave, but he would have his head ; and the same barbarian had threatened he would

have her skull for a drinking cup. Many weeks had passed, and the wife's warm and strong faith could not prevent her natural anxiety from rising high in her breast, as day after day her husband did not come. Each day she began to hope she would see him before evening; and when each evening brought him not, it was a hard task to give up hope, and lie down to rest like the others in the settlement. But one evening, in her dejection and agitation, going again to her Bible for comfort, which she seemed hardly able to receive, her eye lighted on the words of my text: "He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea in seven there shall no evil touch thee. In *famine* He shall redeem thee from death, and in war from the power of the sword."

The effect upon her mind was instantaneous and great. I must not now stop to

describe it. For I wish to inquire whether, according to reason, illuminated by God's word and Spirit, she was right in receiving great consolation; and in this inquiry are contained two questions—the first, whether God, or rather Christ, for God, exercises such power on earth that He controls all things, so that nothing can happen without His permission, and He can and does change the natural course of events, if He thinks fit to do so: and secondly, what kind of persons may rest on such promises; and in what degree they may expect to have them fulfilled in their case for their deliverance. It is the question of the protecting care of Christ's providence. May the Spirit of the truth prevent me from saying anything that is unreasonable, or in other words, untrue. It cannot be unreasonable for man to believe whatever is true concerning God

and His ways, because His ways must be in conformity with the highest reason and the highest truth.

There is strong internal evidence for supposing this to be the earliest of the sacred books, and that Elihu was its author, perhaps about the time of Abraham, or even a little before. But we are more concerned, in connection with this text, about the habits of life that then prevailed. Patriarchal government, idolatries of the simplest kind, liability to forays of predatory tribes, and consequently famine — these give an emphasis to the second verse of the promise in the text: "In famine He shall redeem thee from death, and in war from the power of the sword." Our lot is cast in a land and at a time in which it is not easy to have sufficient sympathy with the sufferings of families in those days. War touches our sub-

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stances only in the form of new or weightier taxes: and not only other contribution is that of the life of the father, of the husband, of the son and brother, the sacrifice of whom casts an unusual degree of blackness on the name of our congregations and other assemblies. It is indeed long since our land has seen the rough face of war with its sword and fire: and as to famine, the legal wisdom of our day has reduced it very nearly to an occasion of larger charity from the rich to their poorer brethren and sisters and their young children. Still a time may come when both these calamities may strike the world together, and we may bear a share of the general affliction. In the meantime we are fain to have recourse to the history of a missionary community in Africa, including about seventy persons, to enable us to feel the full power of the text. Yet we

all have sorrows and calamities of our own. It is not good for man to go long without trials.

The first of the two great branches into which our subject divides itself is, that the hand of God is over all the affairs of man's life, and that He permits, or sends, and can lighten or remove, any and every affliction. "He delivers in six troubles, and in seven no evil touches. He redeems in famine from death, and in war from the power of the sword." The doctrine is the universal providence of God.

This doctrine is so frequently asserted in the sacred pages of God's book, that a man must either accept it or renounce the volume. What is the meaning of Ps. lxxiv. 12, "The help that is done upon earth, He doeth it Himself." It is an assertion which we have indeed to explain, but which

it is foolish to dream of explaining away. It may suit Hindu inventors to set forth Brahm, the Divine Supremacy, resting in an only once broken sleep ; and the Greek philosophy was dark, to represent the gods as not concerning themselves in man's affairs ; but all this is directly in the teeth of God's revelation, which we nationally have accepted for many centuries, ever since we became a nation.

The Bible is so far from favouring those philosophers who substitute an unbroken sequence of the vast nature of things, for the ever-present and all-controlling Power of the Supreme, that it represents the Divine Hand ruling in everything, pencilling the lovely flower, and guiding suns and their planets through space, and regulating the lives and deaths of all creatures, from the least and meanest up to the

highest organizations of body and mind. We go as it were into a market in Judea or Galilee with Jesus, and we see rows of the smallest birds hung up for sale. We, as it were, hear the price, (Matt. x. 29) "two sold for a farthing," (Luke xii. 6, 7) "five for two farthings." What is the teaching of the Great Master? "Not one of them shall fall to the ground," whether stricken by man or naturally dying, "without your Father." Then a sparrow's life is regulated by God. And what the lesson regarding men? "Fear not, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Then God rules the events of our life, and of our death, as also it is said, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." And yet more, God is concerned about our necessary wants, clothing as well as food.

God clothes the grass of the field. And

Christ reasons, "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven (as fuel to produce its heat), shall He not much more also clothe you, O ye of little faith?" But there is another word which received a living comment. I knew of a mother pondering within herself how the resources for her new-born infant were to be supplied. Ere her "anxious thought," *μὴ μεριμνᾶτε*, was satisfied, her infant's life closed ; and as she still lay and pondered on her own unbelief, the other word came upon her, almost as a special message distinctly pronounced, "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" But the Old Testament poetically says, "God feedeth the young ravens that call upon Him ;" and again, "The young lions, roaring after their prey, seek their meat from God. What Thou

Christ overthrows Sceptical Teaching. 163

givest them, they gather. Thou openest Thy hand, and they are filled with food." And instead of this view of a Divine Provider ruling all, some philosophers, because they have learned to trace some of the sequences, and to demonstrate some of the laws which the Supreme has caused to exist and endure, venture to teach us that we are not to believe in any power beyond these sequences, and that it is unphilosophical to believe in the possibility of any interference with these sequences, and that it is easier to believe that there is no God ruling in these things, and, if it seem good to Him, suspending the action of some of the processes of nature. I observe that our Saviour declares the exact opposite, in the strongest manner in which it can be put "Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." St. Paul, too, in prospect of the

shipwreck (Acts xxvii.), first kindly chides the Roman centurion and the shipmaster for not obeying God's order (as I understand it) delivered by him : "Ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, to gain (κερδῆσαι) this harm and loss;" and then the Apostle adds, "And now I exhort you to be of good courage : for there shall be no loss of the life of any among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, "Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar" at Rome ; "and, lo, God hath given thee all them that are sailing with thee."

If this is not a definite assertion of a present Divine Providence, foreknowing and able to regulate the course of a ship in a storm, and to settle who should perish

and who should survive, there is no force in human words. But St. Paul sets an example of full belief in it. He tells them all to be of good courage, and to take some meat, as for four days and nights they had taken nothing; and he adds that the meat was *εἰς σωτηρίαν*, not for their "health," but desirable for, and fit means of, their "preservation;" and he goes so far as to say, bearing Christ's words about God's care of our hairs in mind, "There shall not a hair fall from the head of one of you." Take this *even* as a gnomic sentence of a parabolic nature, and still it asserts, it proclaims, it cries out God's universal care and rule over this world.

And now a word to doubters themselves. We do not affirm that God is continually changing the course of things whenever peril is to be averted; we believe both in

a foreknowing and a foreordering power. And we believe that prayer is foreknown as well as peril; and if God's prescience and skill has in many cases ordained the natural course of things for deliverance in answer to foreseen prayer, it is just the same to the man and woman that He rescues, and they have an equal right to praise Him, and to say, He delivered me. All we add to this is, that it is perfectly reasonable to hold that He that made can control; He that gave the motion can suspend it if it seem fit to Him to do so. We are at a loss to see what there is against true philosophy in thinking thus.

And though our predecessors were told by an eminent northern unbeliever that it is far more likely that our records of miracles are false, than that the miracles are true, we entirely reject the saying. Our

reply is, that the evidence—the cumulative evidence of the truth of the Bible—is far beyond the probabilities that its records of miracles are untrue. To us the sceptical philosophy is immensely at a discount. The internal subjective evidence of the personal experience of millions of religious persons of all ranks is of itself enough. Let only a sceptic try to give himself to the patient humble study of God's word, surrendering every obstacle that his own manner of living presents, and he may haply find himself added to the number of those that find God everywhere doing according to His will among the inhabitants of the earth.

But a word more of Paul and his shipwreck. He teaches that means are as much ordained as the end. He learned this from his Master, Jesus, who refused to cast Him-

self down from the pinnacle of the temple. For St. Paul, seeing that the heathen sailors were about to leave the ship, called out to the military Roman on board with him that this must be prevented. The means of working the ship to the last must by force be kept within her, or else the soldiers would perish. They are notable words: "Except these (the mariners of the vessel) abide in the ship, ye (the soldiers) cannot be (brought to the proper port, and) saved."

We are not called to hold a crude predestination, but an end by means, and the means necessary to the end. Man's instrumentality, necessary to the accomplishment of God's purposes. Deliverances so come to pass.

Yes: we are bold to say that these very philosophers have an idea of God of too absolute a nature, and that they err in

their ideas of God's infinity. God is not so absolutely everywhere and in everything that man is nowhere and in nothing of his own. That is Pantheism, which annihilates man and man's doings, making them all God's acts, and therefore constituting man irresponsible, and all an illusion (maya). God has given man a place in His creation, and if these philosophers say, God never interferes with sequences of nature's processes, certainly man does. Man is an originator. He changes the course of nature at every step. Dumb, deaf, dead materialism gives way before him at every point. At every point his acts are interferences. Then why should it be thought so impossible that God may sometimes interfere too? Grant that any interference of God with nature's course is a miracle; let that definition stand for a moment.

Then why is it to be denied that God can work a miracle, stop the course of one part or one individual item in nature's complicated course? Nature will permit it. Some material may suffer, but some breathing being may be delivered.

A word now of Christ's foreknowledge. I will not take the frequently urged topics of His prophecies, as that about the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, till stone was not left upon stone (*λίθος ἐπὶ λίθῳ*), but I go to His daily life. A man comes to Peter for the temple tax, the half-shekel for the sanctuary, Christ's Father's house. Judas, who kept the purse, is not at hand. Jesus first teaches Peter that He, as God's own Son, is above both the temple and its authorities, and determines that the piece of money (a shekel) for them two, for him and for Peter, "for me and thee," is to be

Christ's Foreknowledge of the Shekel. 171

given them. Whence is He to obtain it? Jesus knows that there is in the lake a fish that has swallowed a shekel-piece of silver, and that this fish will be at a particular spot of the water, to which Peter will go when Jesus has sent him, to take a line, with a hook, and cast it into the lake (θάλασσαν), and that the fish will bite at Peter's hook, and be caught. Is not this a complete foreknowledge? and this exists in everything. And when the exertion of power or influence is necessary to make things suit God's will, cannot He, forsooth, exert that influence? Could He not make that fish to be there, and make some person drop the shekel into the lake, and that fish to catch it? Would it not be very bad philosophy to deny the possibility of all this? If so, then all things, great and small on earth, are fully, entirely under

God's control from all eternity. And this accords with my text. He can deliver in six troubles, and in seven no evil can touch. In famine He can redeem from death, and in war from the power of the sword. There is absolutely no end to the scriptures that might be cited, nor to the similar instances that can be adduced from history and from every-day life, to show how God's hand is exerted, according to the Bible, and in the fullest harmony with true philosophy, to affect the existence of every creature that His power has called into being, and to control and regulate the action of all the laws of natural sequences that He has made to exist, and maintains in existence.

It is not needful to quote many passages to show that the Bible unquestionably asserts God's continual interference

in the affairs of nations. There is one very beautiful combination of two assertions regarding nations and regarding individuals, in the thirty-fourth of Job, verse 29 : "When He giveth quietness, who can make trouble? and when He hideth His face, who then can behold Him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only: that the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared." But all other assertions of God's interferences with the affairs of nations are rendered superfluous by the marked declaration in Jeremiah xviii. In this chapter, asserting the utter subjection of Israel to His own will, by the similitude of clay in the hands of a potter, who can make just what vessel he will, and change its shape in the forming by a slight motion of a hand or a single finger, God, through the prophet (see Jeremiah xviii. 7, 8)

says, "*At what instant* I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it ; if that nation, against which I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought *to do unto them.*" And this is followed by a similar assertion regarding a nation turning to evil, that God would repent of the good wherewith He said that He would benefit them. No more can be required, I think, to prove that trouble and deliverance, both to nations and to individuals, are to be referred to God's regulating hand.

VI.

God's Universal Providence.

PART II.

WHAT PRAYERS GOD GRANTS.

Preached at St. Peter's, Lowestoft, June 16th, 1872



VI.

God's Universal Providence.

"He shall deliver thee in six troubles,
Yea in seven there shall no evil touch thee ;
In famine He shall redeem thee from death,
And in war from the power of the sword."

JOB v. 19, 20.

THE second branch of our subject is the inquiry, Who may take to themselves the promises of God? and what qualifications the literal wording requires.

To give this question its true force we must take more than the 19th and 20th verses into view. It is the first answer of

Eliphaz, the first of Job's friends, and Eliphaz puts it as a universal doctrine that the godly and true are always delivered out of trouble, and that their enemies are always confounded in this world.

Our text is a part of the beautiful description of the prosperity into which God brings the good whom He has afflicted. Let us begin at the eighteenth verse, and go on to the twenty-sixth: "He maketh sore, and He bindeth up; He woundeth, and His hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea in seven shall no evil touch thee: in famine He shall redeem thee from death, and in war from the power of the sword. Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue; neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh;

neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth. For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field ; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee. And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle (thy tent) shall be in peace ; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin (not incur judgment for sin, Montanus). Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth. (And lastly,) Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, as a shock of corn cometh in in his season." And with somewhat of too great confidence Eliphaz adds, "Lo this, we have searched it ; so it is ;" and he turns to Job, saying, "Hear it, and know thou it for thy good."

Now, it is, perhaps, not easy to find a more interesting inquiry than the ques-

tion, "Is this true? Was Eliphaz right? And was Job wrong in arguing that the good do not always come to prosperity, and die in manifest success and peace?" Were we to take the words of Job's friend as merely a general truth, like "Godliness is profitable for all things," we should find no difficulty; but it is evident that Eliphaz means it to be taken for a universal fact, for he argues that Job cannot be sincere with God, else he would not remain in trouble; and it is to be remembered that near the end of the book God condemns all Job's three friends for not having spoken of Himself the thing that is right, in this matter of the incidence and continuance of affliction, which is the subject of this most ancient and lovely poem; and, on the contrary, He praises Job as having been

much nearer the truth. "Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath."

Nor, indeed, need we be surprised that in so early a writing this deep subject, of God in His perfect providence delivering up some of His faithful servants to confusion and affliction unto the end, and letting even their sun set in the clouds of sorrow, was not so understood as it is in the much later writing of St. Paul, in the twelfth of Hebrews, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," and so on; and in Rev. iii., "As many as I love I convict and educate (ἐλέγχω και παιδεύω). Be zealous, therefore, and repent." The Spirit of God in about twenty centuries had made the great subject of the uses of trials much more familiar to His people. But there are touches in this

book that are rich and good for any age.

Still we have to inquire whether Eliphaz has put the matter erroneously in making restoration to worldly prosperity a universal inference from the all-embracing providence of God, which we dwelt upon as the first branch of the subject. Do many persons err in part in their interpretation of many passages of Scripture? (1) One of the most likely classes of God's servants to inherit His promises to the full are those that know and continually make use of the power of prayer. Yes, there are some, perhaps one or two, at least, in every place where the ordinances of religion are quickened by a true putting forth of the main truths of salvation, who habitually carry their sorrows and their fears to God's throne of grace in prayer,

who tell to Him all their wants, and who dare not put plans, of which they hope best, into execution till they have spread them open, and asked His guidance, and been satisfied that they are according to His will ; who bring their blessings thus to His feet to be blest by Him in Christ, before they are at ease in enjoying them, and are continually being preserved from sins and judgments by thus coming before Him to know what they should not do. The actual lot of these devout Christians may preserve us from error in the interpretation of God's promises.

I take the cardinal promise of Jesus in His sermon from the mount (Matt. vi.) : " Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." To stir our slow faith, Jesus

adds: "For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." And our Lord adds more, about giving not His Spirit alone, but "good things," *i.e.*, the good things asked for. Is this standing promise to be understood to say that absolutely in every case of the praying of such Christians, whatever they ask in prayer shall be given? Granted that the wording is strong. But does God intend it to be interpreted so? Are persons right who give it an unlimited sense?

Let us take an actual case or two. The patriarch was a man of this kind; for the beginning of this book sets before us his sons and his daughters as meeting at a family festival at their eldest brother's house. And what does Job? He retires for prayer and sacrifice for his children, lest

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any of them should be carried away in their hearts' youth by the festive joy, and in their hearts rebel against their God; and that if it should be so, they may be brought out of it and pardoned. Did this noble believer obtain what he prayed for? What was the answer of God's providence in that instance? So far was his request from being fulfilled, that a whirlwind came and smote the four corners of the house, and all his sons and daughters perished.

Let us take another case, a man of apparently yet more constant and fervent habits of prayer (2 Cor. xii.). He is afflicted with an infirmity, probably some internal weakness or disorder of body; the word is *ἀσθενεία*. It seems to have impeded him in his toils for the faith; and he specially prayed, not once, but three times, for its removal. Was his prayer followed by a

direct grant of his request? Not so ; not only was it not granted, but he was made quite content not to have it granted ; yes, to take pleasure in the continuance of this infirmity.

I take the highest instance possible from the fifth chapter of Hebrews. Christ in the days of His flesh prayed unto Him that was able to save Him from death, that the cup might pass from Him. He, too, that He might be like unto His brethren in everything except their sins, had to qualify His prayer by a “nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done;” and He drank the cup, and was not saved from death. After this, other instances would lower our subject. We have seen that the answering of our prayers is not universal, and must not be looked for without some limitation. The apparently universal words

must receive some qualifying sense or other.

But methinks some one replies, Faith is wanted as well as prayer. It is to believing prayer that all the promises of God are made. Let us hear St. James (ch. i. ver. 6): "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering" (doubting, *διακρινόμενος*). And our Lord gives a very rich and accumulated promise (Mark xi. 22), "Have faith in God." He had cursed the fig tree, and it had withered, and He teaches, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever may say to this mountain (perhaps referring to the Jewish polity with its seat on Mount Zion), Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart (*διακριθῇ*), but shall believe that the things which he saith are coming to pass (*ἃ λέγει γένηται*), he shall have whatever he saith." And then a

general promise sums up Christ's sayings :
 "Therefore I say unto you, All things
 whatsoever ye may ask praying, believe
 that ye are receiving them, and ye shall
 have them."

Again we must say the expressions are
 very strong, but are we to interpret them
 absolutely, without any qualification, that
 everything, without any exception, can be
 obtained if we can believe? We might stay
 to inquire what is the real nature of true
 faith; but letting that pass just now, is it
 true that if we can ask anything whatever
 in true faith we are sure to have it granted?
 Is it so? What, did not Job possess true
 faith? I am persuaded that he did. But
 St. Paul: surely he, if ever any, had gained
 true faith in God? Yet he did not gain the
 thing he thrice prayed for. And again,
 most of all, our Lord Jesus was full of

loving, devoted, holy faith in His Father and our Father; and faith is not so much a temporary impulse as a permanent spirit of trust; and yet our Lord had to drink the cup which He at first prayed to have removed. It follows, then, that living faith in prayer is not meant to stand as a certain guarantee that literally everything that we make up our minds to desire and ask for shall be granted to us.

But besides faith, another thing of prime importance for obtaining our requests is mentioned by St. John in his Epistles, which I believe to be his latest writings, and therefore the last of the Scriptures. In the First Epistle, iii. 21, he wrote, after urging a consistent, obedient, loving walk with God, "If our heart condemn us not, we have confidence towards God, (lit. freedom of speech, *παρρησίαν*), and whatsoever we

may ask, we are receiving from Him, because we are keeping His commandments, and are doing what is pleasing in His sight" (before Him, in His presence). Does this near and cautious walking with God ensure to him that is so living, while he is praying and believing, everything whatsoever that he may set his mind to ask for? The same instances need only to be once more brought forward to show that not absolutely everything that even such ask will be granted to their prayer.

I hasten therefore to produce the fourth point, up to which we have been working. It is in the same epistle of John, the chief of his last legacies to the Church of Christ, which he loved for their common Master's sake, the fourteenth verse of the last chapter: "And this is the confidence (the same word) that we have towards Him, that

whatever we may ask according to His will, He is hearing us ; and, if we know that He is hearing us, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked from Him." Yes, we have now reached a safe ground for universal belief. If the three former qualifications are found in us, we are sure of obtaining any and every request that is but according to God's will.

The want of having distinctly received the truth of this limitation causes perpetual confusion by constantly raising unwarranted expectations even in members of Christ's true and living people. There is a persuasion in their minds, strong in proportion to the truth of their devotion, that promises such as I have quoted are true for them without any limit ; and though their continual experience is that they do not obtain everything they ask for with great

earnestness, seeming faith, and from godly hearts, yet they return from time to time upon the universal language of these promises, and say it must be true. The promises are universal, and have no limit, and they quote one or more that have none. Then am I not doing every such person a service in pointing to the one limitation that Christ has made known to us by His servant John?

No ; we must never any more deem ourselves entitled to dictate to God, however much we desire. I must append to every petition the condition, "If it be according to Thy wise will." I may entreat, I may supplicate, yea, three times, or for some things all my days ; but it must be in a submissive spirit : "Lord, if Thou wilt," "If it seem good to Thee," "If Thy wisdom see fit ;" "If not, I ask it not, I with-

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draw the request. Whatever be my natural desire, let Thy will take the place of mine. Not my will, but Thine be done. Let Thy wisdom supersede my folly, Thy knowledge my ignorance. How can I judge in comparison of Thee?" This is the centre upon which we must leave all things to turn: the combined wisdom, love, and pity of God in Christ. We must learn to acquiesce; not to have a wish beyond, for a wish beyond is a wish contrary. And are we safe if for a single thing we are contrary to God?

Doubtless this is a great exercise of deference and trust; but we have all our lives to learn it in; and all the Bible teaches it, and the example of the Master above all.

Let us take, perhaps, the hardest case—that of parents interceding for the salvation of their beloved children. Upon it turns

endless union, or perpetual separation. These are feelings that I will not now harrow up and expose. But even they must bow to the wisdom and justice of God. We must pray, and pray with all the faith which we won in our conflict with evil, and we must try "to live more nearly as we pray." But after all, there is a third heart to be moved besides God's and ours ; there is a third will to be the subject of a struggle between prayer and grace on the one side, and sin on the other. I well remember a veteran minister telling of an excellent Christian lady, that she said, "I have given all my children in special prayer to God, and I know that they will all be saved. I have not an anxious thought left about them." Are we to forget the known cases of the children of godly parents dying without exhibiting a single mark of grace

to minister hope to the bereaved? Does the Scripture tell any good of the sons of Aaron and Eli that perished by judgment? or is there any sign of hope in some of the sons of David? No; we must leave to God His own ways, and act and pray more, because we see that we must leave the issue with Him, in whom alone the parent's heart can find repose, as it is written, "And Aaron held his peace."

But it is self-evident that God must needs sift the prayers of His people. He cannot grant them all. They are often opposite. And we must of necessity leave to Him a perfect veto upon all He allows us to ask, yea, to entreat, yea, to supplicate from Him. The old truth that He is too wise to err must be confided in; and that He is too good needlessly to afflict. But there may be necessities in His views

which we cannot apprehend ; reasons for denial beyond our perception ; general rules which in certain cases must have way, notwithstanding all His pity and all our pain.

But within these Scriptural limitations all believing supplications from the truly righteous men who live near to Christ, will gain their objects. It is impossible to overstate the triumphs or exaggerate the power of prayer. When it is according to God's will, Prayer moves the Hand that moves the world. I love these old sayings. On the fulcrum of promise, the lever of faith can move all things ; and thus, as Jesus said, nothing, *i.e.*, nothing that is according to God's will, shall be impossible to us.

The life of Mr. and Mrs. Hinderer, to whose troubles reference was made at the beginning of Part I. of this subject, fur-

The case of Mr. & Mrs. Hinderer. 197

nishes us as striking a fulfilment of it as we could desire to adduce. They were two persons who (1) lived in continual prayer ; (2) they were evidently Christians eminent for faith in God ; (3) they appear to have lived a life very near to God in Christ in their missionary work ; and (4) it appears that it was according to God's will that they should be brought out of this trouble. What, then, is their history but that their prayers were granted ? As to being delivered from the death with which the war menaced them, the missionary was brought safe from Lagos to Ibadan (60 miles) without ever being seen by one of the guards set by the Ijebu king to watch the road and take him. But this happened after a notable circumstance. He had bought in Lagos much provision and other stores for the relief of the community of

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seventy persons in his missionary compound. He had contracted with a merchant for their conveyance, and he was to travel with them for protection. But on the morning of their departure he was so ill as to be unable to ride with them. The convoy was attacked, and many slain, and only one man reached Ibadan. A little later he was able to go ; and partly by taking a new track in the bush, and partly owing to heavy rains, which drove many of the guards off the roads to seek shelter, he arrived, as has been said, without having *seen* an enemy. This was early in May, 1861. In 1862, Ijaye, the contending town, was taken by the Ibadan forces, and like Magdeburg in Germany in the Thirty Years' War, was wholly devastated, swept from the face of the earth. But the king of Ijebu maintained the war for years. Yet in 1866 Mrs.

Hinderer went through his country to Lagos, and some months afterwards her husband; and they met in security in England, the wife arriving in May. the husband in September.

They returned to their loved work in Ibadan, and remained till their strength was wholly gone, when, in 1868, the wife returned safely to England, and in June, 1870, slept in Jesus in an English parish, where her husband continues to labour.

Could I find a more complete double instance of being delivered in war from the power of the sword? I could not find a more touching case than the death of the wife, to fulfil the words: "Thou shalt come to thy grave as a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

But their whole history from the breaking out of the war in 1860 to their rescue

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and passage to England in 1866, is one fulfilment of the words, "In famine He shall deliver thee from death." A heathen woman who supplied them with one article, finding that they ordered a smaller supply because they had not cowries to pay, and knew not when they would receive any, first insisted on their continuing to receive as much, and supplied it thus for about a year: and then when a supply of money came, wholly refused to receive payment. The book itself, p. 238, shall tell a case: One morning, when her husband was absent from home, Mrs. Hinderer assembled the children as usual for prayers, and the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," came from a full heart, for there was nothing in the house which she could eat. The children indeed sat down to a hearty breakfast, but though she was faint with hunger she

could not touch their coarse food. While they were eating, she wandered to the gate of the compound to get a breath of air, and stood for some minutes watching the people going by to the farm or the market. Among others who passed was a woman carrying a bunch of Indian corn on her head, to whom Mrs. Hinderer addressed, according to custom, the native salutation. The woman stood still, and stared with amused surprise while Mrs. Hinderer went on speaking to her. Presently she exclaimed, "How wonderful it is that you white people know how to talk our language!" Mrs. Hinderer explained to her in a few words why she had come to Ibadan, and what she wanted to teach her people. Having listened awhile, the woman asked, just as she was turning away, "Can you eat our corn?" and on hearing that it

would be acceptable, she gave Mrs. Hinderer a handful, which she hastened to roast and eat, gratefully acknowledging, in the simple food provided by a stranger's kindness, the speedy answer to her prayer for daily bread. An unbeliever may see nothing in this but a chance piece of natural kindness. But the question is whether believing students of the Bible ought not to see God's hand in such cases. They universally do. If they are right, the infidel misses all this comfort and spiritual benefit of gratitude. Mrs. Hinderer was reduced at last to one reel of cotton and three rusty needles ; and one pennyworth of meat cast into the soup was all they could afford to buy daily. The last pair of shoes was nearly worn out, when the death of an American missionary's wife at a distance occasioned the sending of three pairs. Mr.

Hinderer had to tear blank leaves from books to continue his translation of the "Pilgrim's Progress." The school work almost stopped for want of materials. The premises were hunted over for things not in immediate use to sell in the market for a few strings of cowries. But in many ways, and some of a very singular nature, such food as beans, and oil, and Indian corn was obtained to the end, and no terror ever came near them. In the lyric language of this book, "They were in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field were at peace with them."

The whole war seems exactly like a device of Satan, working on heathen kings, to put a stop to the missionary work; but the check that it received was not suffered greatly to impede it. It lives; and it is to

be hoped that the record of their work, "Seventeen Years in the Yomba Country," will be owned of God to give a new impulse to missionary devotion in England. Our missionary operations, scanty as they are compared with the Saviour's command, "Go ye into *all the world*," are, perhaps, our brightest sign—the best ground of hope in the midst of many dark prognostics. But our lesson is that the God of David and Anna Hinderer will work similar deliverance for any that in the same spirit dedicate themselves to Him, if they fall in with trouble and peril.

Many other striking instances of God's deliverances must occur to those who love to think of such things. To go no further off, I have read, in this year 1872, in an authentic book, accounts of deliverances singular as the feeding of Elijah by ravens,

and of coincidences as remarkable as any in the Bible. See Dr. Norman McLeod's "Records of a Highland Parish."

I believe the simple truth to be that just as Satan turns the hearts of wicked men to stop the spread of the Gospel, and to mar its vitality by corrupting it, so God is working for His people, and in and by His people, to make it succeed; and I believe that praying souls are receiving deliverances, one here, another there, some to-day, others to-morrow, all over the world wherever God is known.

I believe, too, that there is a much larger amount of retribution being wrought by God in the present world than the ungodly suppose. God visits His people, and the wicked too, with mercy and with judgment. He is working in a thousand million ways—I cannot find words to say

how many ; and this is the great and standing consolation of His people.

Let any of them, and any of the ungodly that may read these pages, receive the literal description from the book itself of the way in which the text prefixed to these thoughts acted on the harassed mind and over-burdened heart of His believing servant, Anna Hinderer, in 1862 : p. 246, " One day especially it had been such a day of hope and expectation ; but the evening closed in without its realization. I went to my room, and wept bitterly, mind and body being exhausted, when my eye lighted on the words " (the text quoted at full) ; and the Journal, April 12, continues thus : " Oh how unspeakably comforting were those promises ! It was as if the blessed Saviour spoke to me in my ear, not only to my heart ;

and I had a night of sweet rest and peace under the shadow of His loving wing. Since then my distress has never been so great. There has been more of entire rest in a sense of His mercy and love, and in the belief that He is a wall of fire round about His people, and that He will do all things well." Then—and I believe it only strengthens the proof of the reality of the support that she received from Christ, ministered through the Spirit—she adds, "Yet, as day after day goes on, knowing that nothing over which he had any control could keep my dearest husband from me, I do feel at times indescribably anxious."

This proves the veracity, the genuineness of the writer. It was in this church chiefly that she and Mr. Cunningham worshipped together.

Then may not this be urged on the unbeliever, and commended to God's believing servants? Such things show a present God ; and these are but samples of what He continually does everywhere for His praying, believing, obedient children.

VII.

The Scriptures the Ground of Faith.

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VII.

The Scriptures the Ground of Faith.

“From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”—2 TIMOTHY iii. 15.



THE whole passage is one of peculiar interest and beauty. A domestic picture rivets our attention.

It is a Jewish mother, who had married a Gentile, and had perhaps become a widow at an early age, teaching her young son the faith of her forefathers. And this is said to have begun when he was a babe, *ἀπὸ βρέφους*.

Is it possible to pass from this picture

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without sending up a prayer to God, that, whoever may become the instructors of the young in this Christian nation, the work may not on any pretext be stained with the greatest of all possible faults, that of omitting instruction in the Scriptures? The Roman orator said, "They appear to me to take the sun from the world (*solem videntur ex mundo tollere*) who take away the hope of immortality."

But I stand in a place where a nearer application of the general lesson is pertinent. And am I not right if I say, however much our university may think fit to approximate to the character of becoming a sound teacher of all sciences and of all languages, may she ever pay the honour due to the sacred writings in their original tongues, in her course of instruction?

The Apostle hopes Timothy will continue

in the things which he learned, and of which he became assured, knowing from whom he learned them, and that from a child he knew "the Sacred Writings," that were "able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

This then may be taken as the first part of our subject ; viz., that there is one kind of wisdom which all men ought to acquire. Timothy was not reared by his mother as an exceptional child, or, as far as we can guess, with any particular prospects. Yet she instructed him, from an early age, in her own holy writings. We have not the smallest reason for supposing that he did not proceed from her hand to regular schools. The Talmud shows that schools abounded, and that the teachers, who are called in the New Testament διδασκάλους

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(not masters), were in high honour; and though the Old Testament writings were mingled and loaded with much foreign matter by the sect of the Pharisees, the Scriptures of that day were certainly not *omitted* in Jewish education. Our Saviour probably alludes to these schools when He says, "The disciple is not above his teacher" (Matt. x. 24); and again, "Every one, when he has been perfected, will be as his teacher" (Luke vi. 40). It is plain that the wisdom that St. Paul looks back to with delight and praise, in Timothy's case, is a particular kind of wisdom, *i.e.*, "wisdom unto salvation;" and the source of it is the Sacred Writings, τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα, the inspired Scriptures of God. I assume that he means this by calling them "sacred." An equivalent term in other parts is holy, ἅγιος.

Then, secondly, why, and in what degree, and in what exact sense, do we believe that the Scriptures merit these august titles? I believe that they were all written by men chosen in God's providence for that purpose; and that these men received assistance from God by the Spirit in writing them all, and in various degrees, for various portions; but for each portion as much as was required to make the writing conformable to what God willed for the instruction of men in those religious truths, of which otherwise man would have been either wholly ignorant, or, at best, very cloudily informed and hopelessly subject to perilous errors.

There is nothing in this theory to make the chosen man a mere instrument, or a pure machine of utterance in God's hand throughout, as if he were a mouth or a pen

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only ; which would be the case if he were only a speaker or transcriber of God's very words, and nothing more.

We may doubtless believe that this was the case in those sayings which are preceded by the words, "Thus saith the Lord." In such portions man was simply God's mouth or hand. But in other scriptures we may well believe that God dealt with the mind of him that wrote or spake, and not with his mouth or hand alone; and that, however their minds were informed of that which God would have them utter, they were left to use their own mental stores and their own mental qualities, under a plenary correcting superintendence of the Holy Ghost.

I have gone thus far into this question, that I might, on the one hand, renounce the mechanical theory of inspiration, viz., that

God dictated every word of the Bible ; and on the other hand, because I wish also to assert that the superintendence of the chosen utterer of God's truth *may*, nay, *must*, be deemed to extend to the words. For the words in a sentence are the bricks or stones of the building. They are the elements of the assertion that is made, without which it has no definite meaning.

As an instance to prove this, St. Paul makes a most important prophecy depend on a word being in the singular, and not in the plural : "He saith not, And to *seeds*, as of many ; but as of one, And to thy *seed*, which is Christ" (Gal. iii. 16). I need not enlarge on this point, and it seems only needful to add that the Bible's sentences are constructed on the principles of popular language.

The Bible gives us histories, hymns,

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prayers, conversations, addresses, letters in the vernacular tongues of the day, and with the degree of scientific accuracy which was customary among the persons of the time. Each book was primarily meant to be understood by the people to whom it was addressed, and to them it seemed neither pedantically peculiar nor scientifically abstruse, and it availed itself without hesitation of all the arts of expression that were then in use.

A wondrous depth may lurk in its simplest sentences. But so it is among ourselves whenever a very superior mind converses with an inferior ; the patent sense of his words approves itself to all hearers. But God's hidden wisdom is the reward of those who are taught of the Spirit, and love to dig in the Scripture mines. In fact, the utmost that there can be of man's peculiar

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mental character, consistently with the Scriptures being God's vehicle of truth, is found in the sacred books.

This union of human and divine, without the destruction of either, has been, and perhaps justifiably, compared to the union of the man and the God in the one Christ. In both cases the title of the Word is given ; in the one to Christ, as the personal utterer ; in the other to the Bible, as the spoken and written utterance of those truths which God would have men to know. "I have given unto them," saith Jesus, "the words that Thou gavest me" (John xvii. 8); and it seems only a particular instance of the general truth, when the last sacred book of the canon is called "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, *which God gave unto Him*, to show unto His servants" (Rev. i. 1); and perhaps the meaning of the words rendered,

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“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. xix. 10), may be, “The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus” to His Church.

Therefore in this office of conveying truth from Christ to His Church the Holy Ghost is called again and again, in John, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας; “The Spirit of the truth”—of that truth which God the Father gave to Christ to give to us by the Spirit; and which man could never have discovered for himself, even if he had longed for it and felt his need of it, as some of the ancients in a certain measure did. This divinely sent truth is what Paul looked back upon as taught by Eunice to Timothy; and he wrote this second epistle to hearten and confirm him in his trying labours for its dissemination.

But I must, in the third place, notice

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that St. Paul implies that a certain preparation of mind is essentially necessary in order to obtain this saving wisdom out of the Scriptures. I hope I do not speak too boldly when I utter my opinion, that of all that Augustin lived to do for the world and the Church, before he fell asleep, when near thirty years of the fifth century had passed away, there is nothing more beneficial to men than his establishing the saying, "Faith must come before understanding" in approaching these Divine truths, or in his own words, "Fides præcedit intellectum." Alas! the contrary is according to our nature, not only in men of high cultivation, but in artisans of strong or even only of very confident minds, nay, even in our agricultural population also. Most men assume that no preparation of heart is needed to enable them to deal with the

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mysteries of the Christian life ; how God works on man, and how man receives God's influences, and how he is changed ; and by what revealed truths all this is explained. For man, having learned to reason about matters of this life with success, leaps to the conclusion that he can equally make his own way in things of the soul, and respecting God, and hell, and heaven. All classes seem ready enough to believe in their own verifying faculty.

But the aim of Augustin was to teach the contrary, when, in opposition to Pelagius, he laid down the short dictum just mentioned. And St. Paul teaches to all the same lesson when he adds to the former part of my text its closing words, "Through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

But the question must now, fourthly, arise, What is faith? "Through faith, *διὰ πίστεως*."

Faith is not the reception by the understanding of certain saving truths ; for it may be doubted whether in this respect there exists in the universe of limited beings a more complete believer than Satan, as it is also written, "The devils believe, and tremble." The faith that saves has reference to the whole powers of man—to his affections as well as to his understanding. As the Bible says, "With the heart man believeth," not meaning with the heart alone, but signifying that mind and heart pass together under the influence of the great gospel truths. Such faith cannot fail to have influence over a man's life in proportion to its strength, so that works become a true test of its existence ; as St. James says, "I will show thee my faith by my works ;" but above all Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Therefore he that would

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obtain heavenly wisdom by understanding the Scriptures, has need to pray that he may be made to feel aright towards those truths that bring salvation, and towards God their revealer.

To take the most general truth that can be given, Heaven is for the holy ; God is holy ; and His commands are for the sake of holiness, as it is written, "The will of God is your sanctification." What avails it for a man to be able to run into the most delicate casuistry as to what is pure and impure, what constitutes justice or injustice to his fellow-man, unless his affections to impure pleasures and to unjust advantages are broken down, or at least greatly checked and dethroned, so that they do not reign in him ? Without this he may become indeed a great admirer of abstract justice ; but that which is wanted is that he should

see the beauty of justice in his own case, and that he should be so smitten with the charms of pure love and a pure life as to flee through grace from vile licences, and keep the very thoughts of his heart ; as old Fuller said to the " Tryers," in the time of the Commonwealth, " I will not now boast much of my religious experiences ; but I will say this, that *I make a conscience of my thoughts.*" This is faith, and it must work in virtuous action as well as in mere theorizing upon Christian virtue. It will, on the whole, sway all the soul exactly in proportion to its power. They who have it not may, in some cases, attain to much understanding of Divine truth ; but the absence of this heart-faith more commonly drives men to reject some parts of the truth of God in the Scriptures. In an age of mere prejudice they are apt to join the opponents

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of revealed doctrine; but if the spirit of the times is in favour of severer treatment, many such pitilessly persecute them that hold true doctrine. For truth rejected is ever truth hated. And no hatred is fiercer than that which is directed against a living religion. The very importance of the subject seems almost to justify severity, and thus men have persecuted to torture and death those that followed the Christian rule.

But this only proves that the great Bishop of Hippo said well, "Faith precedes understanding," and even, as my text implies, that wisdom unto salvation comes only "through faith that is in Christ Jesus."

Nor, fifthly, are the words "in Christ Jesus" to be passed over.

Throughout the New Testament that preposition *ἐν* is rarely used without a certain

innerness of meaning. As the figure of the vine and the branches, used for Christ and His people, describes the branch as *in* the vine ; so they that lovingly and truly believe in Christ are constantly described as *in Him*. "Abide in me" (John xv. 4); and St. John, First Epistle ii. 28: "And now, little children, abide in Him." And may not the use of this form of words in relation to the faith of which we have been thinking mean, that influential saving faith (if I may so speak) *never subsists out of Christ*. It springs up in the soul in relation to Christ ; and thoughts of Christ suit it and develop its David-like strength more than any other ; as David said of the sword of Goliath with which he had smitten off the giant's head, "There is none like it ; give it me." We are made wise unto salvation through faith that is *in* Christ Jesus ; in Christ having

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undertaken to achieve our redemption, in His incarnation, His life, His teaching, His death, resurrection, and ascension; and in all the work He is doing in heaven for us, to the completion of His kingdom ; as it is written, " He is able to save unto completeness, to the complete state, εἰς τὸ πάντελες, them that come unto God by Him (Hebrews vii. 25). These are subjects for faith's meditation ; trees of life on which faith loves to feed ; waters at which she loves to drink ; and as these mingle themselves with other themes from other books, they make those themes and books more useful, and clothe them with a charm and a power not their own. Yes, the knowledge of Christ sheds fresh light on the eye in all our study, contemplation, and prayer. In proportion to our faith our love to Jesus grows, and our delight in

fulfilling His pleasure enriches all our employ.

The sixth part of the subject remains, viz., that all this is to be obtained from the Bible. The Apostle says it is the Sacred Writings that are "able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." I need not stay to show here that true wisdom, and not ignorance, is the mother of real devotion; but I prefer to turn again to the inference that the acquisition of true wisdom is the duty of man. It is the certain duty of every man, as far as he can find or make a way, to be wise, on these topics at least. I believe for myself that the saying is true in its most general aspect, that it is man's duty to his Maker to become wise, as far as he can, in all things, and to acquire all the knowledge that lies within his reach; but how much

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more, in matters regarding his own salvation for eternity, ought every one to set himself "to get wisdom, and, with all his getting, to get understanding." What then shall we include in the study of the Sacred Writings?

We live in a perilous, but a promising age. Every truth has its assailants, and every foundation is shaken. But what of that? The result is that many long-worshipped idols, idols that could neither walk nor stand, are already fallen, and more are tottering; and when all such have come down, truth will be left without a rival. Who does not wish errors of all kinds to disappear, that man may walk in the clear, pure air of truth? Is not the sweet waking dream of the old philosopher the very instinct of all men, when present pleasures and apparent personal interests do not dim

their vision, and drag down their chariots? But if God indeed rule, He must surely be about soon to interfere at such a time as ours. The aspirations of the creature are not for ever to remain "subject to vanity." And on what is the new light of freedom to shine if not on the Book of God? It is no dream that the Sacred Writings, with the special teaching of the Spirit, are the hope of the world.

When one considers by how few, even in this land, the Word of God is well studied, even for practical purposes, and what numbers never master the Scriptures, but only possess imperfect remembrances of chapters read and of verses preached upon, chiefly of those pointed sayings, often out of their connection, by some chance fastened into the memory, one cannot but believe that, should the exception ever become the rule,

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and neglect of the Scriptures become as rare as at present is painstaking consideration, a new character would be taken by mankind, and a new era would begin.

But this would but be the reasonable carrying out of my text. For if every Timothy ought from a babe to be taught the Scriptures, surely every adult Timothy ought to carry on the study of the inexhaustible pages. If there are for the young the parables, and the miracles, and all the captivating incidents of the life of our Lord and the histories of Joseph, Jacob, Esau, Abraham, and of many others, instinct with living interest to the mind of a child, will not the ripening mind and the matured lover of wisdom find ever new matter of unceasing admiration and delight? It seems as if the highest use of all man's other wisdom is to help him to rise a little nearer towards

meeting the gracious descent of God towards him in the Bible.

What then is the position that we would persuade every man to take regarding the Sacred Writings? Nothing short of daily pondering some portion, great or small—sometimes but a verse or two, if it be with the settled purpose of making out the very and real meaning of every word in it, and at other times of larger portions. But the thing commended is the thorough weighing—the sifting to the bran—the getting out of the genuine corn, clear from the husks of received ideas. Ah! we too have our traditions, but they are man; and it is when we can get to the meaning itself that we find God.

But people, and not only of the lower ranks, but of the upper also, give in to the idea that it is beyond their power to master

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God's word for themselves, and to form opinions that are really their own. Would that our time, which shakes many an error to pieces, and spares no truth because it is sacred, might try its powers on this grand mistake ! " There is no evidence," said the great modern northern divine of our time, " like that which a man hammers out for himself, with no other machinery than a Bible and his own conscience."

Books of all kinds may add their light to this. Every science, every art, all researches, are ministering handmaids to Religious Truth in the Bible; for it is the queen of them all. Nor do we think that Bible Christians act wisely in admitting the possibility of any defection and rebellion of her true handmaids against her. Errors in Bible interpretation may and ought to fall; and mistakes from hasty generaliza-

tions in science may be exploded: but true science and the true Bible must agree, for God and His ways are the objects of both. The universe is His ; man is His ; and the heaven of heavens is His ; and, truly read, all His books must teach only truth, and therefore the same.

Individuals scanning the Divine pages will come with different amassments of mental treasure, and with different degrees of mental training, and therefore with different advantages. But the great human help to the appreciation of the Bible's teaching, besides the Holy Spirit and a prepared heart, is just actual life ; to have lived so many years in daily experience of human hopes and fears—*quicquid agunt aut sentiunt homines*.

The Bible is both a book about life, and a cure for the ills of life. All has a practi-

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cal bearing. It is medicine for a manifold disease: and all that know much of the disease are so far prepared to read about the manifold provision for its cure. Hence appears the immense value of common sense, of good sense, of sense in common things, brought to bear upon theology. Therefore the prudent man, the versatile spirit, the manager of many, the contriver of skilful devices, the legislator, all of every profession, should regard their own quotas of experience as so much parallel knowledge for the better understanding of the Bible. Few more pestilential errors are afloat than the mistake that only clerics and not laymen can or ought to attempt to deal with deep religious truth.

On the other hand, I venture to say that until the Church's general conclusions are identified with the expressed essence of the

formed opinions of the whole body of Christian men, the world will not have come to its fair chance of the interpretation of the Bible. Each rank, each class, is needed to contribute its share ; and, as St. Paul says, "They that seem to be more feeble are necessary." Whatever can bring the working men, the thinking working men of England and of the world, to a careful weighing of the Bible for themselves, will do much towards purifying, and sobering, and practicalizing theology. God hasten it by His chosen means in His own time.

But something remains to be said. I forget not that the authentic books are in defunct languages, and that this throws a new feature on our meditations, and supplies a new argument for diligent study. Our English translation is indeed one of marvellous beauty ; and, if I am allowed, after

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long years spent in using it, to express an opinion concerning the New Testament, it exhibits great skill and knowledge of man. Nevertheless to deny that a man thoroughly conversant with the original tongues has great advantages in his daily meditations on the New Testament, would be the mere hardihood of folly. Perhaps I may even venture to refer to some points in my own experience, from which I have been learning, only too slowly, what I now venture to set down.

I find in looking back over nearly forty years of ministration as a clergyman, that though it was not possible for me from the first not to have my Greek Testament in constant service, more than half of that time had passed ere I had come to perceive what I deem its chief and richest use. But a change of position and new friends caused

me to see how to draw much more from the sacred writings of the New Testament. I then commenced what I hope never to discontinue, *i.e.*, to concentrate some of the best time every day on examining some passage to its very fundamental principles, expecting that I shall find its language so accurate, that the closer it is pressed the purer shall be the essence of truth that it yields. Profiting by critical writers of any and of every age, I have rested my great hope of attaining to Christ's mind and to the mind of God upon the grammatico-historical interpretation of Scripture, *i.e.*, on the usage and relation of words, and on the laws of language, the habits of the time when it was written, and on the comparison of words, terms, and modes of reasoning in any, but particularly in the most parallel, scriptures.

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Upon this point I wish to add my firm belief that the Alexandrine Greek seems in the New Testament to have risen to a language of no ordinary degree of accuracy. Not prepositions alone have astonished me by the correctness of their use, both in their connection with nouns and in composition—so that one can read through pages without finding a single loose or otiose usage—but one may trace the same accuracy running through tenses and moods, with certain regular exceptions, but with exceedingly rare anomalies ; and the same may be observed of the cases of nouns. I believe for myself that the elevating subjects of Christian thought raised the language itself in which they were first embodied, and afterwards carried from man to man, and from land to land ; and I have sometimes thought that I trace a similar

though less lofty elevation in some of the works of some of the greatest of the Greek fathers in some of the after ages.

But if this be at all true, what an inducement to every Greek scholar to make his New Testament in Greek his daily companion, and to charge himself for immortality every day with some one new lesson from its stores of singular beauty and wisdom! Such an one, if he be a preacher, will never want fit texts for sermons, or new matter to put into them; and all that have recourse to this subsoil ploughing of the field of God's word will become rich and enrich others.

May I now be suffered to present some specimens of the fruit of such labour? Is not every light cast on any text a common increase of wealth? But it must be most

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desirable that every new case should be well tested before it is received.

First: Is not serious error constantly founded on the current rendering of 1 Cor. i. 30, "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"? Every student has but to read it in the Greek to see that it is, "Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God [*i.e.*, God's wisdom exhibited in the salvation of men; which is a constant usage of *σοφία* in the New Testament; and the text proceeds] "both righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," *i.e.* (1) our being justified and sanctified on earth, and (2) the final redemption of our souls and bodies hereafter. Does not this rendering at least give a consistency to the passage that adds greatly to its force? At least, all ground

is taken from under the common heretical saying, These four things, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, are personal gifts, and are already attained in perfection by them that are in Christ:" for sanctification certainly is not yet fully attained, nor redemption.

I next notice John i., last verse, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." This verse only begins to stand a chance of right application when it is perceived that it ends, not with a genitive, as if it were "upon," as upon Christ as the ladder between heaven and earth, but with an accusative, "*unto* or *toward* the Son of man." If Christ were meant to be alluded to there as a ladder, must it not have been in the genitive?

Take now St. Paul's reasoning about

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faith, in Romans i. and iii. All the rebuke and blasphemy against faith as a thing without works vanishes when we read, "to whom God reckoneth righteousness *apart from works*," χωρὶς ἔργων—*i.e.*, though works are required, they stand apart: they are not considered in justification.

Take next Romans viii. 27. The whole difficult passage is very considerably cleared by rendering τὸ πνεῦμα ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁγίων ἐν-τυγχάνει κατὰ Θεόν, "The Spirit maketh intercession on behalf of the saints *after the manner of God*," *i.e.*, as one Divine Person of the blessed Trinity.

There is another and still more important instance. The word Παράκλητος is used four times in our Saviour's discourse with his disciples in St. John's Gospel, and is translated "the Comforter." Does it not add to its beauty to give it its more

general sense of "Helper," which includes "Advocate" and "Teacher" as well as "Consoler"? And in each of the four usages of it by Jesus, which have been referred to, the chief idea is that of the Holy Spirit the Teacher of the Church and of the world in the absence of the departed Saviour.

I venture not into cases where it has seemed to me that great light is cast on passages of the Old Testament Scriptures by such writers as Boothroyd and Montanus, and a certain modern critic of the Psalms, who is of the seed of Israel, and now is an ordained missionary of the Scottish Free Church in Algiers. Every student has his own walks, which he most treads. May I then add a few more instances of the light that is gradually gathering on passages of the New Testament;

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none of which, I venture to think, will be found alien to that general flood of Hellenist thought and language, which had spread over so large a portion of the Roman Empire, cities of the West as well as of the East, at the time of our Saviour's coming?

As the third of our creeds is now in controversy, what is more natural than for me to note, regarding the Third Person in the blessed Trinity, that He is said (John xv. 26) to be sent by the Father and by the Son alike, but "to proceed *out from*" (ἐκπορεύεσθαι παρὰ) the Father only? Has not Eastern doctrine, then, the advantage over Western in this controversy of the procession of the Spirit? Moreover, as to the beautiful doctrine of the subordination of the Son to the Father in position and in functions, which is in no wise antagonistic to

His being equal with the Father in nature and in eternity of existence, how beautifully it seems to spring up before us in the study of chapter after chapter of St. John !

Again : are we sure that we have St. Paul's real meaning when we render his imperfect tense, *ἤχόμην*, "I could wish," instead of "I did wish [or used to wish] myself accursed from Christ," *i.e.*, before I became a Christian ? For the words "on behalf of my brethren " may stand connected by a different punctuation with " I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart " (Romans ix. 3): " I have great heaviness, etc., on behalf of my brethren ; for I (too) used to wish, etc., etc."

But there is still a richer instance in Hebrews ii. 10. May it not be taken thus : " It became Him, on account of whom are all things, and through whom are all things,

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having brought to glory the Captain of their salvation, to perfect many sons through sufferings"? Certainly one may protest against rendering ἀγαγόντα "in bringing." It claims a past or instrumental sense, "having brought" or "by bringing;" and then it must be connected with "the Captain of our salvation," or else the chronology of the verse is wrong. If He was "brought to glory," and we are "being perfected through suffering," all becomes clear and in order.

Again, in the much considered passage in Hebrews v. 7—10, I think any critic would allow the following translation as at least a possible one, since in it the usage of the words is supported by the Septuagint, "Who in the days of His flesh, having offered both requests and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to

save Him from death" (*i.e.*, though He was not heard in that first petition); "and *was* heard" (εἰσακουσθεῖς) in regard to His second desire, viz., "being delivered from that which [ἡὺλαβεῖτο] He *cautiously feared*," *i.e.*, from any feeling of insubordination to the Father.

In justification of this explanation, I would only say, Is it not a first *fact* that the Son did in a sentence or two absolutely ask to escape the agony before Him? And is it not a second fact that He immediately rose to a higher petition of tender solicitude never to wish anything without, or apart from, the Father?

I need not here go into more instances to indicate that the privileged Greek scholar has a door open to new apprehensions of the New Testament, and thus to new aspects of God's revealed truth.

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Beyond doubt, innumerable niceties reveal themselves to the patient and humble investigator. The books of the New Testament may be termed our "*exemplaria Græca*," to turn over day and night. This New Testament may seem like a limited farm ; but, worked well, it will yield abundant religious emotions and never-ending instruction.

I must utter a word concerning that our other and vast field—our "*ingentia rura*," the accepted fathers of the Church in all ages. Is it not reasonable to believe that men full of the Spirit of God have in the fifteen centuries before the Reformation, as well as those of the subsequent period, left much light as to the interpretation of Scripture? Was not the Spirit, at least, in many of them? There is need indeed of discrimination and ex-

perience to find the straight path of sound apostolic truth amid the frequently singular meanderings in the several hundreds of large volumes that invite research. Many a meadow of this territory is richly enamelled, and many a stream shines like molten silver, and the thoughts gladly labour up many a soaring peak and many a magnificent dome: and many of them are rich with the most precious ore of all kinds. But lo! while we have been thinking how little of their true treasures has been brought within reach of the general mind, a masterly advocate of the Talmud rises up and demonstrates that the New Testament may be greatly illustrated from out of the coeval and later treasures of the Jews' old literature. Surely the past is about to converge on the coming generation; and the Book of God is about to

become the general delight at home, and the general companion abroad, of much larger portions of the human race.

To contribute under God's leading in any small degree towards this grand result of Christ's coming to this sin-ruined planet is to my view the highest dignity of service to which any scholar can aspire.

There are two thoughts that I ought to add to this discourse, since it might be said to be very imperfectly interpreted without them. The first is involved in Christ's saying that the word which He hath spoken shall judge those for whom He spake it in the great day. If it be true that no written word of God is of private application, but that all God's words apply to all in proportion to the similarity of their position and character, then we cannot but affirm that the sacred words, a part of which Timothy

learned in his youth, ought to be the frequent subjects of every man's meditation and prayer. It has been well said that faithful and earnest sermons die not, but that they will meet their hearers again in the day when the Son of man comes to reveal all things. But the greatest reason why this can be truly said is, that the Scriptures are assumed to contain and set forth true words of Christ and of God. Man's words fade as flowers, but the words of God remain. If sermons then are to be lasting in their effects, it must be because their courses of thought entwine themselves around the amarant of Scripture. Man's knowledge will vanish in comparison of greater acquirements in the higher world ; but the Scriptures that he has mastered and received into his heart will need no change. Happy, then, are they who love to drink

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in continually these foretastings of immortality ; and happy are they that urge them upon others. For when the Master comes, there will, if I may so speak, be nothing new. The principles of judgment will be the sayings of the Holy Scripture, and the child of the Word of God will recognize all. He will, as it were, glance around him, and be at home in the new order of things.

The other line of thought, which seems to be equally required, is another maxim of Jesus, which seems to me to underlie many chapters of the central part of the Gospel of St. Luke. It is diversely given ; both that God is no respecter of persons, and that there are last who will be first, and there are first that will be last (Luke xiii. 30).

This maxim lies indeed at the base of all appeals respecting self-acquaintance. We may very easily over-estimate ourselves ;

but the day that is coming will reveal the truth. It is to be expected that great mistakes will then come to light. Every man in this life is walking in shadows. These shadows will disappear in the fulness of the light. It is the just judgment of God, ἡ δικαιοκρισις (Romans ii. 6) to which we are looking forward. It is not, then, what our positions in this life have been: it is not what men have thought of us, and not even what we have thought of ourselves. To have been followers of the word, struggling in watching and prayer, as believers in Jesus "do and will do," to attain to its divine morality, will alone stand the test of that day. Its fire will destroy everything else. Faith that has no fruits will be pronounced dead, and will be condemned. Self-love, self-estimation, self-seeking, are but the chief fruits of the fall. But to follow

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Him who for man resigned heaven—to learn unselfishness from our great Pattern, while we simply lean on His atoning death for the pardon of our many sins—this is what the Bible teaches ; and this alone will bear us up at that time. Timothy found it in his youth : Paul found it in the way to Damascus. We, too, must find it, or Christ died for us in vain.

What follows then from all this? What is the whole scope of the Bible? What is its end, its τέλος, to which all its motives and all its doctrines are ministrant handmaids? It is the acquisition, through the grace of Christ, of holy, true, loving, and active hearts, after the image of God. The commandments are for this. The Gospel of salvation is for this. This is salvation itself, irrespective of time or place. True, we cannot obtain salvation without being

justified by Christ. But justification by Christ's death is God's way of beginning to make us live justly. We receive pardon of sin, that we may, by God's help, fight against and overcome sin. The recovery of lost holiness by them that believe is the very will of God. It is the *res ipsa*, the thing itself for which God has all along been working with fallen man.

Man's ways of recovering his lost goodness have now for 6,000 years been miserable failures. Man's religions have made men worse. Men have made their own religious books to no purpose. They never produced morals among men in general, or a holy fear of God. Their religions and their religious books have for the most part stimulated immorality. So God has all along taught men by special messages by night and by day. But happy was it for

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men when God began to put His messages into a written form. And great was the change when those writings were multiplied innumera- bly by printing. And thus at length, in the fulness of time, every man will be able from a child to know God's way to holiness, justice, truth, purity, and loving-kindness, and to every excellence, through faith that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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